



Zgodovinsko društvo Ormož

**Zbornik referatov**

**VINCENT CAINKAR**  
**VINCENC CAJNKO**

**(1879 - 1948)**

**Življenje in delo ameriško slovenskega politika,  
društvenega in kulturnega delavca ter  
dolgoletnega predsednika Slovenske narodne podporne jednote**

## **Vincent Cainkar (Vincenc Cajnko), 1879–1948**

Življenje in delo ameriško slovenskega politika, društvenega in kulturnega delavca ter dolgoletnega predsednika Slovenske narodne podporne jednote

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## **Uvodna beseda**

Slovenci so se v tujino izseljevali v vseh zgodovinskih obdobjih, val najintenzivnejše emigracije pa je bil čas od tretje četrtine 19. stoletja dalje. Po nekaterih ocenah naj bi danes zunaj historičnega slovenskega etničnega ozemlja po svetu živel okoli pol milijona ljudi slovenskega porekla. Tako lahko ugotavljamo mnogo usod ljudi, ki so se na pot iz domovine podali bodisi zaradi ekonomskih, socialnih, verskih ali političnih razlogov. Izseljevanje Slovencev v Združene države Amerike je bilo kot del evropskega izseljenskega vala še posebej intenzivno na začetku 20. stoletja. Nikoli dotlej in tudi pozneje ni slovenskega etničnega ozemlja zapustilo toliko ljudi.

V novi domovini so se Slovenci organizirali in združevali okoli bratskih podpor-  
nih organizacij in slovenskih katoliških župnij ter se srečevali v slovenskih narodnih domovih. V okviru teh organizacij, ki obstajajo še danes, so skrbeli za ohranjanje in razvoj slovenske kulture in jezika vse do danes, ko imamo včasih občutek, da se center slovenstva seli iz Slovenije, k Slovincem, ki živijo v sosednjih državah in drugod po svetu. Videti je, da delitve iz zgodovine tam slabijo, ponos na Slovenijo pa raste. Doma naj bi bilo ravno obratno – delitve se večajo, medtem ko ponos slabi.

Slovence, ki živijo zunaj meja Slovenije, bi lahko pozval, naj se vrnejo v Slovenijo in prinesejo s seboj nekaj tega ponosa in sposobnosti dogovarjanja, optimizma in zazrtosti v prihodnost, saj bomo le na tak način prišli do družbe, kakršno si želimo. Družbe, v kateri ne bo več pomembno, kako se kdo piše, kdo je bil njegov ded, kateri skupini pripada, temveč bo pomembno le, kaj dela in kaj je že naredil.

*Akademik prof. dr. Boštjan Žekš  
Minister, predstojnik urada RS za Slovence  
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Anton Luskovič<sup>1</sup>

## ***KDO JE MOŽ, KI JE BIL V SVOJI NOVI DOMOVINI, V ZDA, ZNAN KOT VINCENT CAINKAR?***

*Otvoritveni govor na mednarodnem simpoziju,  
Kog, 28. julija 2011*

Danes smo se zbrali na Kogu, v idiličnem majhnem kraju na zadnjih obronkih Slovenskih goric, v kraju, ki je dal ime najmanjši krajevni skupnosti v Občini Ormož. Samo še dobrih 900 ljudi živi danes v šestih vaseh, ki se kot venec spletajo po vinogradniških slemenih in travniških dolinah, okrog najvišjega hriba s cerkvijo Sv. Bolfenka in osnovno šolo, ki sta dve najdominantnejši zgradbi v kraju.

Kogovske vasi nosijo zanimiva imena: Kog, Gomila pri Kogu, Lačaves, Jastrebcji Vodranci in Vitan. Zanimiva imena in zanimiv svet.



*Kog.*

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<sup>1</sup> Anton Luskovič, univ. dipl. pravnik, predsednik Zgodovinskega društva Ormož.

Za Kog pa je danes še posebej pomemben dan.

Obudili bomo spomin na enega od naših sinov, na rojaka Vincenta Cainkarja ali Vincenca Cajnka, kot se ga spomnijo le še redki Kogovčani.

V rojstni knjigi župnije Sv. Bolfenka na Kogu je bilo dne 22. novembra 1879 vpisano rojstvo Vincenca Cajnka. Rodil se je v družini revnih staršev v Jastrebcih, v hiši, ki je takrat imela številko 28.



*Rojstna hiša.*

Oče Ivan (Johan) Cajnko je bil gornik, po gorskem pravu torej uživalec vinograda. Rojen je bil 18. oktobra 1842 in je bil sin Jožefa in Marije Cajnko. Februarja 1868 se je poročil z Marijo Zabavnik, hčerko kmeta Jakoba Zabavnika iz Vodrancev 23. V življenju, polnem pomanjkanja in vsakodnevnega boja za preživetje, se jima je rodilo deset otrok. Vincenc je bil sedmi otrok po vrsti:<sup>2</sup>

1. Janez (Johan), 30. 12. 1867
2. Ana, 10. 7. 1870
3. Franc, 19. 9. 1872 (umrl 14. 10. 1872)
4. Matija, 16. 2. 1874
5. Marija, 11. 11. 1875
6. Franc, 6. 9. 1878 (umrl 14. 12. 1878)
7. **Vincenc, 22. 11. 1879**
8. Bolfenk (Wolfgang), 22. 10. 1881 (umrl 9. 8. 1884)
9. Ivana, 23. 8. 1884
10. Franc, 1. 12. 1886

<sup>2</sup> Status animarum župnije sv. Bolfenka, Kog, Škofjski arhiv Maribor.



Botra pri krstu malega Vincenca je bila Helena Rajh (roj. Lukman), kmetica iz Vodrancev. Krstitelj je bil takratni kogovski župnik Johan Trampuž.

Toliko o rodbinskih razmerjih, povezanih s človekom, o katerem bomo danes spregovorili besede spomina.

\* \* \* \* \*

Pisalo se je torej leto 1879, rojstno leto Vincenta Cainkarja. Lahko bi rekli, da je tudi vreme, kakršno je bilo to leto, napovedovalo nenavadno usodo mladega Vincenca. Takoj po novem letu tega leta je bilo nenavadno toplo. Februarja je začelo snežiti, okrog poldneva pa se je razdivjala močna nevihta z bliski in grmenjem, padala je debela toča. Sredi oktobra se je popoldne razdivjala strašna nevihta z močnim vetrom, ki je pihal iz vseh strani. Popoldne, 15. oktobra, je ponovno divjala strašna nevihta, z grmenjem, bliskanjem in močnim dežjem. Ponoči je začelo snežiti in snežilo je ves naslednji dan. Debel sneg je prekril vinograde in tik pred trgatvijo povzročil ogromno škode, mnogo drevja je bilo polomljenega.



*Osnovna šola.*

Kronist pravi, da je bila zima 1879/1880 tako huda, da je več ljudi in živali pomrznilo. Na Dravi je bil pet čevljev debel led, velike ledene plošče so poškodovale precej mlinov.<sup>3</sup> Temperature so se dolgo časa zadrževale precej pod ničlo, med minus 15 do minus 18°C in so povzročile veliko škodo v vinogradih in na sadnem drevju. Še sredi marca je bila zemlja močno zmrznjena.

Ko je Vincenc Cajnko začel obiskovati osnovno šolo pri Sv. Bolfenku na Kogu, je bila šola trirazrednica. V šoli so poučevali en nadučitelj, podučitelj in učitelj verouka. V šolo je bilo vpisanih 180 učencev iz vasi Vodranci, Jastrebcji, Kog z Gomilo in Vitani z Lačavesjo. Šola je stala v Občini Kog, na vrhu prelepega hriba, okrašena z vinogradi.

Tisto leto, ko je Vincenc postal birmanec, je prišlo v cerkev Sv. Bolfenka 206 birmancev.

Po končani osnovni šoli je Vincenc pomagal staršema pri težkem in ubornem gorniškem delu. Vojsko je služil v rajnki Avstriji pri dragoncih, oziroma v lahki konjeniški enoti. Bil je postaven fant in vojak.

Slovenski pisatelj, publicist in prevajalec Mirko Kuhelj, doma iz Kostanjevice na Krki, ki se je kasneje prav tako preselil v ZDA, kjer je služboval kot blagajnik v glavnem stanu SNPJ in bil med drugo svetovno vojno tajnik Slovenskega ameriškega narodnega sveta, je ob njegovi smrti v časopisu »Glas naroda«, ki je izhajal v New Yorku zapisal, »da je kot otrok, kot kratkohlačnik občudoval dragonarja Cajnka, ki je nosil lepe rdeče hlače, svetle škornje in par zvezd na ovratniku svoje vojaške bluze«.<sup>4</sup>

Po odsluženju vojaškega roka se je vrnil domov. Težko gorniško življenje, neprestano pomanjkanje in brezperspektivnost tukajšnjega življenja sta mladega Cajnka leta 1904 popeljali v širni svet iskat boljše možnosti v Ameriko.

Ker bo o »ameriških letih« našega rojaka spregovoril sedanji predsednik SNPJ g. Joseph Evanish, naj sam omenim le to, da je naš Vinc Cajnko v Ameriki postal Vincent Cainkar. Začel je delati v tovarnah v Pensilvaniji, nato pa se je s svojo družino preselil na farmo v državo Missouri.

Nemirni duh, kakršen je bil Cainkar, je delo na farmi kmalu pustil in odšel v St. Louis, kjer je leta 1907 pomagal pri ustanovitvi društva 197 SNPJ.<sup>5</sup> Leta 1908 je bil izvoljen za delegata na kongresu SNPJ in od takrat dalje je bil trdno vpet v delo te organizacije v ZDA. Na 7. konvenciji SNPJ leta 1918 je Cainkar postal predsednik in tej organizaciji predsedoval skoraj 30 let, vse do leta 1948.

<sup>3</sup> Fran Kovačič: *Trg Središče: krajepis in zgodovinois.* (Maribor: Zgodovinsko društvo za Slovensko Štajersko, 1910), str. 568.

<sup>4</sup> »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju«, *Glas naroda*, letnik 56, št. 193, (New York, 5. oktobra 1948), str. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Prav tam, str. 3.

Umrli je ravno v času, ko se je Chicagu začel 4. kongres Ameriškega slovanskega kongresa. Vincent Cainkar je s to organizacijo tesno sodeloval, saj je bil kot predsednik SNPJ član njenega glavnega odbora.

Vincent Cainkar je bil po svojem ideološkem prepričanju socialist. Ko je izbruhnila II. svetovna vojna, je bil Cainkar med prvimi, ki so se odločili, da je treba nekaj storiti za pomoč Slovincem v stari domovini. »*Podpiral je vsako napredno idejo, veroval je v ideal dela in v končno zmago pravice in svobode*«, so 29. septembra 1948 zapisali v nekrologu v Prosveti, glasilu SNPJ.<sup>6</sup>

Kogovčani bi morali biti ponosni na tega preprostega in istočasno velikega rojaka. Upam, da bo današnji dan vsaj malo pripomogel k temu, da bo spomin na Vincenta Cainkarja, našega Vinca Cajnka, med Kogovčani živel, saj je spoznanje o tem, kako pomembni in veliki ljudje so pognali korenine na tej ilovnati prleški zemlji, najboljše zdravilo za zdravljenje kompleksa majhnosti in odrinjenosti na rob.

Ljudje, kot je bil Vincent Cainkar, so nas od življenja tu, na obrobju, postavili v središče sveta.

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<sup>6</sup> »SNPJ Mourns Passing of Supreme President Cainkar«, *Prosveta*, letnik 40, št. 191 (Chicago, 29. septembra 1948), str. 3.



## **SLOVENCI IN PROCESI IZSELJEVANJA<sup>2</sup>**

Tako v strokovnih krogih kot v javnosti po navadi s »krovnim« nazivom »slovenski izseljenci« poimenujemo vse tiste osebe slovenskega porekla, ki so se odselile s slovenskega etničnega ozemlja, in to ne glede na vzroke izselitve in številne spremembe državnih meja v različnih zgodovinskih obdobjih. Pri tem moramo to skupino ljudi ločevati od tiste, ki jo imenujemo zamejski Slovenci, pri kateri pa gre za pripadnike slovenskih manjšin v sosednjih državah. Celo v sami Sloveniji pojma slovenski izseljenci mnogi ne znajo razlikovati od »zamejcev«, s čimer označujemo pripadnike avtohtone, na teh ozemljih že stoletja naseljene slovenske manjšine v sosednjih državah. Seveda je treba pri tem imeti pred očmi še skupino, ki jo imenujemo zdomci; predstavljajo tiste, ki so se začasno izselili predvsem v evropske države. Danes se je večina »začnih« izseljencev oziroma zdomcev odločila za sprejem državljanstva držav priselitve in s tem za stalno naselitev. Po razpadu Jugoslavije pa je govora tudi o Slovencih, ki živijo v državah nekdanje Jugoslavije; te lahko večinoma štejemo med izseljence.

Dandanes slovensko izseljensko in zamejsko skupnost ocenjujemo na pol milijona Slovencev, ki živijo zunaj meja Republike Slovenije. Vendar pa je slovenska izseljenska skupnost v različnih obdobjih predstavljala Slovence v različnih državno-političnih tvorbah. V obdobju pred prvo svetovno vojno oziroma v času habsburške monarhije so v skupino izseljencev spadale tudi slovenske skupnosti v Gradcu, na Dunaju pa tudi tista v Bosni. V jugoslovanskem obdobju slovenske zgodovine med leti 1918 in 1991 pa v to skupino vključujemo tudi Slovence v Beogradu, Bosni, Zagrebu ter v drugih krajih nekdanje Jugoslavije.

Slovenci so se izseljevali v vseh obdobjih svoje zgodovine, še zlasti intenzivno pa od sredine 19. stoletja naprej. Prvo obdobje slovenskega izseljevanja predstavlja čas pred začetkom 70. let 19. stoletja. V tem obdobju so se izseljevali predvsem pustolovci, misijonarji in neposredno po letu 1848 tudi politični emigranti. Čeprav ti izseljenci niso ustvarili trajnih izseljenskih naselbin, niti niso v večji meri vplivali na nadaljnji potek slovenskega izseljevanja, pa vendarle predstavljajo predhodnike množičnega izseljevanja Slovencev.

Najintenzivneje se je slovensko prebivalstvo iz svojega etničnega ozemlja izseljevalo v obdobju od konca 70. let 19. stoletja pa do začetka prve svetovne vojne. V tem času se je iz omenjenih območij izselilo več kot 300.000 ljudi, od tega okrog

<sup>1</sup> Doc. dr. Boris Jesih, državni sekretar, Urad vlade Republike Slovenije za Slovence v zamejstvu in po svetu, Komenskega 11, 1000 Ljubljana; višji znanstveni sodelavec na Inštitutu za narodnostna vprašanja v Ljubljani.

<sup>2</sup> Za pomoč pri nastanku tega prispevka se zahvaljujem dr. Zvonetu Žigonu in Jerneju Čelofigi.

60.000 na območje habsburške monarhije. Večina teh se je izselila v bližnje industrijske in rudarske predele Zgornje Štajerske ter na Dunaj, nekaj pa tudi v Bosno in Hercegovino. Okrog 30.000 Slovencev se je izselilo tudi na območje Vestfalije oziroma ostala rudarska območja Nemčije, vsi drugi pa v Severno ter Južno Ameriko (od tega okrog 20.000 v Južno in nekaj več kot 150.000 v Severno Ameriko). Po prvi svetovni vojni je najprej sledil val vračanja slovenskih izseljencev v novonastalo državo (Kraljevino Srbov, Hrvatov in Slovencev), vendar pa so se razočarali nad razmerami, ki so vladale v tej državi, kmalu vrnili.

Naslednje obdobje izseljevanja slovenskega prebivalstva z ozemlja njihove avtohtone poselitve se je začelo po prvi svetovni vojni, ko je bilo slovensko etnično ozemlje razdeljeno med štiri države. V tem obdobju se je v največji meri izseljevalo prebivalstvo s Primorske, ki je tedaj pripadla Italiji, nekaj pa tudi z avstrijske Koroške, s Porabja na Madžarskem in tedanje jugoslovanske Slovenije. Selili so se v glavnem v Argentino in Kanado, od koder so se nekateri kasneje preselili v ZDA. Še vedno pa je bilo množično tudi izseljevanje v nekatere zahodnoevropske države. V letih med obema vojnama so se tako številčno precej okrepile zlasti slovenske naselbine v Vestfaliji, v katere so se naseljevali Slovenci z rudarskih območij. Pri Primorcih in Koroščih ni šlo več v tolikšni meri za izselitev »za kruh z maslom«, ampak za izselitev iz nacionalnih stisk oziroma za politično emigracijo v klasičnem pomenu te besede.

Po drugi svetovni vojni se je iz Slovenije najprej izselila skupina političnih emigrantov. Le-ti so se v glavnem izselili v Kanado, Južno Ameriko ter Avstralijo, manjši del pa tudi v ZDA. Valu političnih migrantov so se ob koncu 40. in v začetku 50. let 20. stoletja, ko je to dovolila vlada tedanje Jugoslavije, priključili tudi njihovi svojci, obenem pa se je v 50. letih začelo izseljevati tudi prebivalstvo, ki je domovino zapuščalo v iskanju boljšega zaslužka. Kljub temu da je šlo v glavnem za ilegalno izseljevanje, teh izseljencev ne moremo označevati kot politične emigrante, saj pred izselitvijo praviloma niso bili izpostavljeni političnim pritiskom takratne jugoslovanske oblasti.

Potem ko so jugoslovanske oblasti sredi 60. let 20. stoletja »odprle« meje, je Jugoslavija postala edina socialistična oziroma komunistična država, ki je svojim državljanom omogočala zakonito preseljevanje v druge države. Tako so se jugoslovanski državljanji lahko pridružili svojim prijateljem in sorodnikom kjer koli po svetu, če jim je priselitev omogočala migracijska politika priseljenske države. Politika odprtih meja je ustvarila tudi nov tip migranta, ki je obdržal državljanstvo svoje države, država gostiteljica pa ga je obravnavala kot začasnega migranta oziroma kot gostujočega delavca. V slovenski terminologiji se je zanj uveljavil izraz zdomci. Rezultat izseljevanja v 60. letih 20. stoletja je bila naselitev Slovencev v vseh zahodnoevropskih državah, še zlasti v Nemčiji, Avstriji, Švici, Franciji, Švedski, Nizozemski in Norveški pa tudi v Avstraliji.

V zadnjih treh desetletjih se je izseljevanje iz Slovenije zmanjšalo in je omejeno predvsem na začasno izseljevanje iz študijskih razlogov, zaposlitve ali za izseljeva-

nje iz osebnih razlogov (poroka). V zadnjih desetih letih se je nekoliko povečal trend izseljevanja v Avstralijo in na Novo Zelandijo, a še vedno govorimo o vsega 200 do 300 osebah.

Slovenski izseljenci so se v novi domovini organizirali v glavnem v treh vrstah organizacij, in sicer v bratskih podpornih organizacijah, v slovenskih katoliških župnijah ter v slovenskih narodnih domovih.

Bratske podporne organizacije so bile in so društva, ki delujejo kot zavarovalniške družbe za nezgodno in zdravstveno zavarovanje, hkrati pa s svojim kapitalom podpirajo tudi založniško, kulturno, politično in športno-rekreativno dejavnost. Takšna oblika organiziranosti se je uveljavila zlasti v ZDA in v Kanadi, deloma pa tudi v okviru južnoameriških držav, zlasti v Argentini. Prve bratske podporne organizacije so Slovenci organizirali že v 80. letih 19. stoletja v ZDA. V Kanadi so jih ustanavljali v 30. letih 20. stoletja, v Južni Ameriki pa tudi še po drugi svetovni vojni. V Avstraliji in v Evropi takih organizacij niso ustanovili, saj jih zaradi državno organiziranega socialnega, zdravstvenega ter pokojninskega varstva niso potrebovali.

Drugo obliko organiziranosti slovenskih izseljencev predstavljajo etnične župnije, ki so bile v ZDA večinoma ustanovljene v obdobju od začetka 90. let 19. stoletja do konca 20. let 20. stoletja. Katoliško cerkev je ob velikem izseljenskem valu, ki je zajel Evropo, zanimalo predvsem ohranjanje vere med izseljenci, saj so nekateri v katoliški hierarhiji menili, da gre pri izseljencih tudi za nevarnost izgube vere. Organizacija slovenskih župnij v ZDA je potekala podobno po vseh slovenskih nasebinah. Duhovniki so bili bodisi iz stare domovine bodisi ljudje, ki so študirali za duhovniški poklic po ameriških semeniščih.

Slovenski izseljenci so v cerkvene zgradbe vložili precejšnje vsote denarja, tako da te cerkve še danes predstavljajo pomembne spomenike slovenske kulture v ZDA. Župnije so po drugi svetovni vojni ustanavljali tudi slovenski izseljenci v Kanadi in Argentini. Za razliko od omenjenih držav pa so v Avstraliji ustanavljali le cerkvene misije, saj cerkvena zakonodaja v Avstraliji ni dopustila ustanavljanja etničnih župnij. Kot misija so organizirane tudi slovenska izseljenska katoliška cerkvena skupnost v Montrealu v Kanadi in izseljenske katoliške cerkvene skupnosti v zahodnoevropskih državah.

Tretjo obliko organiziranosti slovenskih izseljencev predstavljajo narodni domovi, ki jih podpirajo tako bratske podporne organizacije kot tudi župnije oziroma njihove organizacije. Narodni domovi so predstavljali zbirališče slovenskih izseljencev, v katerih so potekali sestanki društev posameznih podpornih jednot ali pa kulturne prireditve in politične manifestacije. Takšnih domov so slovenski izseljenci v ZDA zgradili preko 100, nekaj pa tudi v Kanadi, Argentini in Avstraliji. Slovenski narodni domovi marsikje še danes predstavljajo središča kulturne, društvene in politične dejavnosti slovenske izseljenske skupnosti.

Omeniti je potrebno še nekatere komplekse, ki imajo podobne funkcije kot narodni domovi. Med njimi velja omeniti zlasti zaselek SNPJ, ki je postal tudi samostojna občina. Na njem je vrsta objektov, vključno z veliko dvorano, v kateri potekajo največje prireditve. V tem sklopu so tudi obsežne rekreacijske površine in bivališča za odmor in rekreacijo. Slovenski begunci iz obdobja po drugi svetovni vojni in njihovi potomci so v 60. letih 20. stoletja v bližini Clevelanda zgradili Slovensko pristanišče, ki je še danes prizorišče številnih dogodkov v tem kraju.

Precej narodnih domov je tudi v Avstraliji, kjer se nekateri vzdržujejo z igralnimi avtomati. Tudi tu so prirejali in prirejajo še danes kulturne in zabavne prireditve.

Vse prej kot zanemarljiva je vloga Slovencev v izseljenstvu kot posameznikov, saj so kot uveljavljeni člani večinske politične ali kulturne srenje s svojim delovanjem veliko prispevali k ugledu slovenske izseljenske skupnosti in tudi Slovenije kot njihove izvirne domovine.

Največ tovrstnih primerov je med Slovenci v ZDA, ki so se kot člani mestnih svetov uveljavljali že v prvi generaciji, že v 80. letih 19. stoletja. Nedolgo za tem so se prvi slovenski izseljenci ali njihovi potomci uveljavili v zakonodajnih zbornicah v zahodnih zveznih državah. Tako na primer najdemo slovenske izseljence med poslanci v zakonodajni zbornici države Wyoming. Že v 30. letih 20. stoletja so bili med 25 člani mestnega sveta v Clevelandu štirje slovenskega porekla, v 40. letih pa je kandidat slovenskega porekla Frank Lausche zasedel celo položaj župana mesta Cleveland. Pozneje je postal najprej guverner države Ohio, potem pa še dve mandatni obdobji (do leta 1968) senator iz Ohia v ameriškem zveznem senatu. Po drugi svetovni vojni je bil član ameriškega kongresa John Blatnik iz severne Minnesote, med Slovenci bolj znan kot član ameriške vojaške misije pri slovenskih partizanih med drugo svetovno vojno. V 80. letih so bili kar trije člani ameriškega kongresa slovenskega porekla, in sicer Dennis Eckart iz Clevelanda, Ray Kogovšek iz južnega Kolorada in James Oberstar iz severne Minnesote. Konec 70. let se je začel politični vzpon Georgea Voinovicha (po materi slovenskega porekla), ki je bil podobno kot Frank Lausche najprej izvoljen za župana Clevelanda, nato za guvernerja Ohia in nazadnje za zveznega senatorja (upokojil se je konec leta 2010). Med današnjimi aktivnimi politiki slovenskega porekla v ZDA na zvezni ravni je treba omeniti senatorko iz Minnesote Amy Klobuchar, senatorja Toma Harkina iz Iowe in kongresnika Paula Gosarja iz Arizone, ki je potomec slovenskih priseljencev iz Rock Springsa v Wyomingu.

V clevelandskem mestnem svetu sta še danes zelo vidna potomca Slovencev Joe Cimperman in Michael Polenšek.

Podobno stanje je bilo tudi v Avstraliji, kjer se je med tamkajšnjimi Slovenci uspelo prebiti med avstralske zvezne senatorje Tomu Lajovicu. Manj pa so bili v političnem življenju v novi domovini aktivni Slovenci v Argentini in Kanadi.

Slovenski priseljenci in njihovi potomci so uspeli tudi v katoliški cerkveni hierarhiji. Za ilustracijo velja omeniti škofe v Marquettu, in sicer Friderika Barago in



njegova naslednika Jakoba (Jamesa) Trobca ter Janeza (Johna) Vertina; škofa v Leadu v Južni Dakoti Janeza (Johna) Stariho, kanclerja škofije v Duluthu Jožefa Frančiška (Josepha Xavierja) Buha, pomožnega škofa clevelandske škofije Edwarda Pevca in kardinala Alojzija Ambrožiča iz Toronta.

Med pomembne slovenske rojake seveda štejemo tudi Vincenca Cajnka, v ZDA znanega kot Vincenta Cainkarja, ki mu je posvečen tudi današnji simpozij.

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Anton Luskovič<sup>1</sup>

## **POLITIČNE IN GOSPODARSKE RAZMERE NA KOGU OB KONCU 19. IN V PRVI POLOVICI 20. STOLETJA**

V prispevku bom poskušal orisati gospodarske, politične in siceršnje razmere na Kogu v času, ko je tam živel in ustvarjal Vincent Cainkar.

Vas Jastrebcji, kjer se je rodil Vincenc Cajnko oziroma Vincent Cainkar, je ena od šestih kogovskih vasi. Za ime vasi sta se do propada habsburške monarhije, leta 1918, uporabljali nemška oblika imena vasi Jastrowetz in slovenska Jastrebcji. Med II. svetovno vojno so nemške okupacijske oblasti kraj preimenovali v Sparbersbach.

Vas je najverjetneje dobila ime po jatah jastrebov, ki so gnezdili v listnatih gozdovih, zlasti ob potoku Šantavcu. Tako trdi Peter Dajnko. Jastrebi naj bi bili nenavadno veliki, tako da so odnašali tudi otroke.<sup>2</sup> Drugi avtorji trdijo, da ime Jastrebcji izhaja iz imena nekdanjega župana ali funkcionarja zemljiške skupnosti.<sup>3</sup>

Slovenski jezikoslovec, publicist in etnolog Karol Štrekelj domneva, da so bili Jastrebcji mogoče podložni nekemu rodu s pridevkom Jastreb (Vultur, Geier), kot se je v 13. in 14. stoletju imenovala znana ptujška rodbina.<sup>4</sup>

Jastrebcji se prvič omenjajo leta 1320 z imenom Sparbergspach. Pozneje, v drugi polovici 18. Stoletja, se na jožefinskem vojaškem zemljevidu uporablja ime Jastrebci. Opis pravi, da trdnih zgradb v vasi ni. Ležijo na nadmorski višini od 230 do 270 m. Gre za precej razloženo naselje v skrajnem vzhodnem delu Slovenskih goric, ki seže ob potoku Šantavcu do državne meje s Hrvaško. Deli kraja so: Ciganija (v Ciganiji, ciganijski, Ciganijci), Tumpovščak (v Tumpovščaku, tumpovčaški, Tumpovščani) in Pesovščak (v Pesovščaku). Imena izpričujejo izvore. Tako pravijo, da so v Tumpovščaku nekoč prebivali »tumpasti«<sup>5</sup> ljudje. Staro izročilo pravi, da so v Pesovščaku v pradavnih časih živeli celo psoglavci.

Cesarsko namestništvo v Gradcu je s posebnim odlokom 20. septembra 1850 razglasilo nove občine (soseske). Nastale so občine, ki so se vključevale v okraje.<sup>5</sup> Območje Koga, ki je pripadalo sodnemu okraju Ormož, je bilo organizirano v treh občinah:

<sup>1</sup> Anton Luskovič, univ. dipl. pravnik, predsednik Zgodovinskega društva Ormož.

<sup>2</sup> Intervju s Pepiko Luci, domačinko iz Jastrebcjev.

<sup>3</sup> Borut Belec: *Ljutomersko–Ormoške gorice*. (Maribor: Založba Obzorja, 1968), str. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Karol Štrekelj, »Razlaga nekaterih krajevnih imen po Slovenskem Štajerju«, *Časopis za zgodovino in narodopisje*, letnik 3 (1906), str. 63.

<sup>5</sup> Miroslav Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20. stoletju – diplomatska naloga*. (Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani, 1986), str. 64–66.

- Občina Vitan, s krajema Vitan in Lačaves;
- Občina Kog, s krajema Kog in Gomila; in
- Občina Jastrebcji, s krajem Jastrebcji.<sup>6</sup>

Občine so bile poseljene pretežno s kmečkim življem in se po svojem pravnem položaju niso razlikovale od trških ali manjših mestnih občin. V teh občinah naj bi krajanje reševali svoje osnovne probleme: financiranje šol, urejanje cest, izdajanje viničarskih knjižic, izdajanje ubožnih spričeval itd. Občine naj bi bile sorazmerno samostojne, vendar je dejanske samostojnosti bilo zelo malo, predvsem zaradi slabe ekonomske moči občin. Na čelu občine je bil župan, ki je bil človek iz premožnejšega sloja prebivalcev.

V občinah je živelo v glavnem slovensko prebivalstvo, ljudi z nemškim občevalnim jezikom je bilo zelo malo. To je bil razlog, da so uradniki poslovali in občevali z ljudmi v slovenskem jeziku. Problem je bilo dopisovanje z višjimi organi, zato je časopis Straža pozval vse slovenske občine, naj uradujejo izključno v slovenskem jeziku in naj odklonijo dopis katerega koli urada, ki bo napisan v nemškem jeziku.

Pravi državni organ je predstavljala politično-upravna enota, ki se je imenovala okrajno glavarstvo.

Občina Jastrebcji je leta 1879 imela 255 prebivalcev (129 moških in 126 žensk), ki so živeli v 58 hišah, od tega so bile tri že na pol porušene. Hiše so bile raztresene po dolini, večinoma so bile že zidane, nekaj je bilo še lesenih, vse pa so bile krite s slamo. Več kot 90% vseh domačinov je bilo kmečkega stanu, k tem so se prištevali tudi vinogradniki.

V obdobju od 1870 do 1918 je bila nataliteta v Jastrebcih nekajkrat višja kot danes, vendar je bila tudi smrtnost otrok izjemno velika. Polovica vseh rojenih otrok je umrla že pred prvim letom starosti. Do konca 19. stoletja so imena v rojstni knjigi praviloma pisana v latinici, ki je bila včasih kar naključno kombinirana z nemško ortografijo (Theres, Gertraud, Joseph itd.). Od preloma stoletja so vsa osebna imena pisana v slovenski obliki.

Po socialno-ekonomskem statusu so se prebivalci delili na 1 polzemljaka, 5 četrzemljakov, 8 kočarjev, ostalo so bile viničarije.

V gospodarskem smislu je prevladovalo vinogradništvo in razdrobljeno poljedelstvo. Krave so se poleti pasle na občinskem pašniku ali pa so jih hranili s travo, nakošeno v vinogradih. Ceste so bili pravzaprav samo kolovozi, čez potok Šantavec je bilo postavljenih nekaj brvi proti Preseki in proti Ogrski.

V Občini Jastrebcji je v tistem času deloval kamnolom dobrega zidarskega kamena, ki so ga prodajali tudi ljudem iz sosednjih vasi.

V Jastrebcih so se rodili tudi nekateri omembe vredni ljudje:

<sup>6</sup> Tonček Luskovič: *Kog: krajepis in zgodovino*. (Velenje: Založba Pozoj, 2009), str. 169–188.

- Jože Kerenčič (1915–1941), narodni heroj, pripovednik, pisec socioloških razprav, idejni vodja narodnoosvobodilnega gibanja v Prlekiji in Slovenskih goricah, ustreljen kot talec v Mariboru;
- Alojz Šparavec (1819–1857), kulturni in politični delavec, ki je pomagal kulturnemu delavcu in zagovorniku gibanja za kulturno združitve južnoslovenskih narodov Stanku Vrazu pri zbiranju slovenskih štajerskih ljudskih pesmi in je na vseslovenskem kongresu v Pragi leta 1848 (skupaj z narodnim buditeljem Antonom Globočnikom) edini zastopal interese slovenskega ilirizma.
- Božo Vičar (Matija) (1894–1972), operni in koncertni pevec. Umrli je v Zagrebu.
- Jožef Kolarič (1882–1942), kmet in vojak, odlikovan za hrabrost pri preboju Solunske fronte s Srebrno Karadžordževo zvezdo z meči in, kot edini med oficirji, s francoskim vojnim križcem s palmo.

\* \* \* \* \*

Kakšne so bile pravzaprav razmere v teh krajih na prelomu 19. stoletja?<sup>7</sup>

Leto 1848 je kljub mnogim nejasnostim in razočaranjem prineslo slovenskemu kmečkemu človeku pravo revolucionarno spremembo. Pod vplivom februarске revolucije v Parizu ter pod vplivom marčne revolucije leta 1848 v Avstriji so se tudi na slovenskem podeželju počasi drobili okovi fevdalne odvisnosti od zemljiških gospodarjev.

Žal slovenski politični predstavniki v Ljubljani niso bili kos novemu položaju in zahtevnim nalogam, ki jih je prinašal novi čas. Njihova nezrelost in nesamostojnost ter strah pred revolucionarnimi pojavi na podeželju so jih kmalu potisnili pod vpliv avstrijskih reakcionarnih sil, ki so podpirale ogroženo dinastijo in mnogonarodno habsburško monarhijo.

Pravo nevarnost nemških raznarodovalnih teženj so začutili tudi Slovenci na Štajerskem. Tu se je tudi iz teh razlogov pojavila močna ilirska struja (Stanko Vraz), ki je iskala zveze s Hrvati.

Narodno prebujenje na štajerskem podeželju se je manifestiralo v zbiranju podpisov proti sodelovanju Slovencev v frankfurtskem parlamentu in v izobešanju slovenskih zastav v mestih in trgih. Časopisna poročila iz leta 1848 govorijo o izobešanju zastav v Mariboru, na Ptuju, v Ormožu in Ljutomeru. Leto 1848, »pomlad narodov«, se je počasi spreminjalo v »poletje narodov« v mnogonarodni avstro-ogrski monarhiji. Druga polovica 19. stoletja je bila tako v znamenju trdega boja slovenskega naroda za svoje politične, kulturne in socialne pravice.

Tudi Kog, kraj na obrobju, kraj na meji, je zajel pomladni piš. Čedalje več ljudi je opozarjalo na brezpravnost, na krivičnost, ki jo je povzročalo lastništvo tujcev,

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<sup>7</sup> Prav tam.

še posebej v vinogradniški dejavnosti, kjer je bilo do skrajnosti izraženo socialno razlikovanje in nasprotje viničar – vinogradnik, ki izhaja iz odnosa do lastnine proizvodnih sredstev.

## **Gospodarske razmere**

Predvsem geografske značilnosti kogovskega območja so vplivale na to, da je v 19. stoletju vinogradništvo postalo glavna kmetijska panoga. Vse večja socialna diferenciacija, ki ji lahko sledimo do konca prve svetovne vojne, ima svoje korenine že v 19. stoletju. Tako poznamo v smislu socialne varnosti na eni strani vinogradnike, ki so kljub krizam in zadolževanju lahko pridelali toliko, da ob pametnem gospodarjenju niso čutili pomanjkanja osnovnih življenjskih potrebščin. Na drugi strani pa je več kot polovica viničarjev pridelala na najeti zemlji le toliko, da so ob ugodni letini imeli dovolj hrane le za kratek čas.

Za razumevanje socialno-političnega razvoja in do skrajnosti izraženega nasprotja vinogradnik - viničar, ki izhaja iz odnosa do lastnine, je treba ločiti dva sloja, ki sta bila nekje v večjem, drugje v manjšem nasprotju.

Sloj vinogradnikov po svoji sestavi ni bil enoten ne v nacionalnem ne v socialnem smislu in tudi ne glede na kraj bivanja. V nacionalnem smislu ločimo domačine in tujce – to so bili predvsem nemško govoreči z nemškega etničnega ozemlja habsburške monarhije. Glede na kraj bivanja ločimo tiste, ki so prebivali na območjih, kjer so bili vinogradi, in tiste ki so bili od drugod, predvsem iz vasi na Dravskem polju, ter tiste, ki so prebivali v mestih in trgih. Glede na družbeni status pa ločimo veleposestnike – fevdalce (Ormož, Dornava), cerkvene in civilne institucije, meščane in tržane ter kmete.

Domača in tuja posest vinogradov sta bili v drugi polovici 19. stoletja skoraj izenačeni, vendar so imeli prebivalci Koga v lasti le četrtno vinogradov. Kmečka gospodarstva so bila v večini primerov drobnolastniška in srednje velika. Značilen je sloj kajžarjev vinogradnikov z manj kot 1 ha zemlje.

Gospodarstva so imela povprečno 2,6 ha zemlje. Med lastniki iz drugih krajev so prevladovali posestniki iz Središča in okolice ter s katastrskih občin, ki mejijo na Kog. Ti so imeli v lasti 44,8 % zemljišč, ki so bila v lasti nedomačinov. Posest nemško govorečih lastnikov z nemškega etničnega ozemlja je obsegala 26,5 % vinogradov nedomačinov. Dobra polovica posesti nedomačinov je pripadala kmetom, slaba tretjina graščinam, ostalo je predstavljala meščanska in cerkvena posest.

Ob koncu stoletja se je pojavila, najprej na Primorskem, nato pa še drugod po Sloveniji, trtna uš, ki je uničila cele nasade vinske trte. Kot edino sredstvo za rešitev vinogradništva se je pokazalo sajenje zoper trtno uš odpornih trt na ameriški podlagi in njihovo žlahtnjenje z evropskimi sortami.

Država je sicer poskušala položaj reševati z ugodnimi krediti, vendar so se vinogradniške površine vse do leta 1940 nenehno krčile. K temu je treba prišteti še množične prodaje vinogradov, tako da so se lastniška, demografska in zemljiška struktura v relativno kratkem času zelo spremenile. Domačih lastnikov je bilo vse manj, tuji veleposestniki so prevzemali najkvalitetnejše površine.

Država je za kvalitetno vinogradništvo skrbela tudi z represivnimi ukrepi, saj so vinogradnike, ki so sadili in razmnoževali samorodnico, sodno preganjali. Posamezni vinogradniki so tako lahko obdržali le do 500 trsov samorodnice, vse ostalo pa je bilo treba izkrčiti. Take ukrepe lahko zasledimo vse do leta 1935, ko je lahko vinogradnik zamenjal dva izkrčena trsa samorodnice za en trs žlahtne sorte.

Da bi vsaj malo zaščitili propadajočega kmeta pred vdorom močnega kapitala pa tudi zaradi nacionalnega interesa, so bile ustanovljene kmečke hranilnice in posojilnice. Na Kogu sta delovali dve. Te ustanove so delovale po tako imenovanem reiffeissnovem sistemu –sistemu vplačanih deležev. Kmečke hranilnice in posojilnice so pomenile resnično pomoč prezadolženemu podeželju, vendar propadanja manjših kmetij niso mogle ustaviti.

Jože Kerenčič je v socialni študiji »Študij o naši vasi« leta 1936 v *Ljubljanskem zvonu* zapisal:

*Ljudje počasi obtožujejo čas svojega življenja, dogajanje, kamor so pahnjeni. Zvemo, kako so po naših vaseh začeli goreti večni ognji, kako ljudje svetijo s trskami, sladkajo s saharinom, solijo z živinsko soljo.*

*Kakor zgodba iz srednjega in zgodnjega novega veka pod grofi, dokler tudi naša zemlja ni občutila prosvetljenstva in zloma fevdalne družbe sredi prejšnjega stoletja.*

*Ko se je na razvalinah fevdalizma razbohotil kapitalizem, so se naši ljudje začeli izseljevati, bežati od rodne grude, ki so jo gotovo ljubili, v Ameriko, v Francijo, na Westfalsko in drugam »sreče« in kruha iskat, ki ga rodna zemlja«osvobojenimkmetom« ni nudila dovolj, saj je povečini še vedno v lasti veleposestev in kloštrov.*

*Zdaj gre za slovensko kmečko ljudstvo, ki predstavlja večino v svojem narodu, za delovne množice, ki so v daljni in bližnji preteklosti dajale svežih tokov narodnemu kolektivu, tujini, bežale stran od zemlje v industrijo, za hlapce in služkinje, za sluge, financarje, eksekutorje, policarje in vojake, gre za množice, ki so nujno vezane na zemljo in na pogoje, ki v kapitalističnih odnosih vladajo naši vasi.*

*Gre za stotisoče slovenskega kmečkega ljudstva.. Zaradi kruha se se tisoči vdinjajo pod najbolj neugodnimi pogoji (viničarske mezde), sproščajo strasti v pohlepu, sovraštvu, pobjih in pokolih, vse to zaradi kruha. Nastajajo družinske tragedije, razpadajo družine, duševna razklanost, padci vseh vrst in neskončno trpljenje.*

## Politične razmere

Slovenci na Kogu so v času avstro-ogrške vladavine tako kot drugod na Štajerskem svoje politično delovanje usmerili v uveljavljanje narodne zavesti in narodnih zahtev po enakopravnosti. Stopnji narodne zavesti in s tem tudi uveljavljanja politični moči slovenskega življa lahko sledimo na podlagi volilnih rezultatov občinskih, deželnozborskih in državnozborskih volitev. Pri tem je treba upoštevati nekatere značilnosti takratnega volilnega sistema in seveda dogajanje na širšem območju, zunaj območja Koga.

Konec leta 1902 so bile deželnozborske volitve. Narodni volilni odbor v Ljutomeru se je odločil, da ne postavi skupnega kandidata, in je na ta način prepustil odločitev volivcem. Rezultati volitev so bili naslednji: Ivan Kočevar je dobil 70 glasov in premagal slovenskega protikandidata Antona Korošca, ki je dobil 44 glasov. Nemški kandidat na volitvah je dobil samo 8 glasov.<sup>8</sup> Ljutomerski volilni okraj je tako postal eden od treh centrov na Štajerskem, kjer je prišlo v začetku 20. stoletja do prvih razpok v enotnosti slovenskih političnih strank.

Jeseni 1906. leta so se v celjskem Narodnem domu zbrali mladi intelektualci, zlasti odvetniki, ki so se jim pridružili nekateri naprednejši starejši člani in se odločili za lastno politično pot. Ustanovili so novo politično stranko, ki so jo poimenovali Narodna stranka (NS). Svoja programska načela so združili v drobni knjižici z naslovom »Štajerski Slovenci, kaj hočemo?«<sup>9</sup> Njihovo najvišje načelo je bila narodnost, zato so zahtevali narodno samoupravo – v bistvu zedinjeno Slovenijo – z lastnim parlamentom v Ljubljani, slovenski jezik v šole, urade, na železnici itd. Nastopali so proti klerikalizmu, vendar niso bili nasprotniki vere. Na svojo stran so hoteli pridobiti kmečki stan, zato so propagirali ideje zadrug, za ljutomerski okoliš posebej vinarskih in sadjarskih. Pridobiti so želeli slovensko delavstvo, trgovce in obrtnike, zato so med drugim zahtevali tudi izgradnjo železniške proge Ljutomer-Ormož. Svoje pozicije so iskali tudi v učiteljskih krogih in med uradništvom slovenske narodnosti. Med podpisniki knjižice sta bila med drugimi tudi posestnik, tržan in župan iz Središča ob Dravi Josip Šinko, in zdravnik dr. Karel Chloupek.<sup>10</sup>

Medtem je tudi dr. Anton Korošec organiziral svoje somišljenike. V začetku leta 1907 je bil v Mariboru ustanovni občni zbor Slovenske kmečke zveze (SKZ). Da bi že vnaprej preprečili neugodne posledice razkola, so se konec novembra leta 1906 sestali v Mariboru deželni in državni poslanci ter se dogovorili o ustanovitvi Narodnega sveta, v katerem so bili privrženci obeh strank.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Vasilij Melik: *Volitve na Slovenskem 1861–1918*. (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1965), str. 391.

<sup>9</sup> Vekoslav Špindler: *Štajerski Slovenci, kaj hočemo?* (Celje: [s. n.], 1906).

<sup>10</sup> Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20. stoletju ...*, str. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Janko Orožen, »Politični razvoj v Celju in Celjski pokrajini od 1848–1918«, *Časopis za zgodovino in narodopisje*, letnik 47 (1971), št. 2, str. 250.



Toda tega »slogaštva« je bilo konec že naslednje leto, saj so volitve v državni zbor leta 1907 povsod prinesle dvojne kandidature. V sodnem okraju Ljutomer je na teh volitvah v kmečko kurijo zmagal Ivan Roškar, ki je bil kandidat SKZ, v sodnem okraju Ormož pa dr. Miroslav Ploj, kandidat NS.

V tako razdeljene »interesne sfere« je po letu 1907 posegel Viktor Kukovec iz Ljutomera, ki je tega leta postal uradni kandidat Socialdemokratske stranke (SDS) za sodni okraj Maribor.<sup>12</sup>

Prvi javni shod SDS v Ljutomeru je bil v Kukovčevi gostilni, aprila leta 1907. Na shodu sta govorila Kukovec in Etbin Kristan.<sup>13</sup> Naslednji teden, 14. aprila, je bil na podobnem shodu NS v Ljutomeru med govorniki tudi Kukovec, ki je zagovarjal tezo, da Slovenci nismo narod kmetov, ampak narod revežev. S tem je opozoril na vprašanje viničarjev in želarjev (kajžarjev).<sup>14</sup> SDS je imela potencialne privrženca edino v omahujočih viničarskih vrstah, ker industrijskega delavstva ni bilo niti v Ljutomeru niti v Ormožu, kaj šele na podeželju.

Kljub vsem poskusom se stranka SDS ni mogla uveljaviti, tako da sta v Jeruzalemskih goricaх zadržala politični vpliv dva glavna rivala SKZ in NS. Borba med obema strankama se je prenesla tudi med preproste ljudi, ki so na najrazličnejše načine izražali svojo politično pripadnost in poskušali omalovaževati svoje politične nasprotnike.

Leta 1909 so bile deželnozborske volitve, na katerih je najboljši rezultat dosegla SKZ, saj so bili vsi štirje njeni kandidati izvoljeni v deželni zbor: v Okraju Ljutomer Franc Robič in Ivan Roškar, v Okraju Ormož pa Anton Meško in Jožef Ozmec. V mestno kurijo (Ormož, Ljutomer) je bil izvoljen poslanec nemške narodnosti Josef Ornig, v Središču pa kandidat Narodne stranke dr. Vekoslav Kukovec.

V Jastrebcih je bil 15. avgusta 1909 politični shod SKZ, ki sta ga organizirala poslanec Anton Meško in kaplan Franc Štuhec. Shod so pripadniki NS ovirali s kričanjem in z žvižganjem od 16. do 19. ure tako, da govornika nista mogla do besede in sta zborovanje zaključila.<sup>15</sup>

Časopis Straža je o dogodku 15. avgusta 1909 objavil dobesečen prepis pisma, ki ga je poslal župnik Zadavec:

*Petnajstega avgusta 1909 je bil v Jastreški občini politični shod Slovenske kmečke zveze (SKZ). Organiziral ga je deželni poslanec Anton Meško ob pomoči kaplana Štuhec Franca. To ni bil pravi shod ampak divjanje. Mi dobro vemo, kako podivjana je tukaj liberalna*

<sup>12</sup> Prav tam.

<sup>13</sup> Etbin Kristan (1867–1953) se je kasneje izselil v ZDA in bil med prvo svetovno vojno med voditelji Jugoslovanskega republičanskega združenja, med drugo svetovno vojno pa predsednik Slovenskega ameriškega narodnega sveta.

<sup>14</sup> Novak: Jeruzalemske gorice v 20. stoletju ..., str. 70.

<sup>15</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Središču«, *Straža*, letnik 1, št. 97 (Maribor, 18. avgusta 1909), str. 3.

*mladina in tisti mladi možeki – očetje kmetje, ki so pred kratkim zapustili svoj mladeniški stan in stopili v sveti zakon. Nismo mislili, da bi liberalni Slovenci mogli biti tako podivjani. Da bi mogli uprizoriti še večjo podivjanost, so si naprosili Serjance, to je Središčane. Bil je iz Grab neki človek, ki je delal huronsko kriko in štihala sta mu dva golobrada gospodeka, ki sta imela še otročje glase. Od štirih popoldne do sedmih zvečer je bilo tako neznansko drtje, vpitje in žvižganje, da bi lahko slišali v deveto deželo. Govornika nista mogla govoriti, zato je g. predsednik ob 7. uri zaključil ta shod. Ta podivjanost je sad dobro znane liberalca. Njegovo črno delo sedaj nadaljuje neki »hohštapler«, ki nas je tudi posetil in počastil. On je že poslal v liberalne novine svojo poslanico in gotovo v drugačni luči, kakor tukaj. Te podivjanosti se zelo sramujemo pošteni Slovenci, četudi je nismo mi krivi, ampak podivjana liberalna stranka, ki se ponaša s Plojem – uskokom, z neresnico in s skrajno predrznostjo. To so novodobni kristjani. Ernest Slanc je bil tukaj 16 let nadučitelj. Bil je sem službeno prestavljen iz Dobove pri Brežicah in je tukaj netil in razširjal liberalizem. Iz Grab je bil Anton Kukovec. Golobradca sta Anton Plepelec in Matija Veselko, t.j. Bartolov sin, oba iz Središča. Zelo se je hlastil Jožef Kolarič, roj. V Jastrebcih, zdaj na Cvenu. Dalje Ivan Dečko t.j. Solarov Vanč s krnjavim nosom, svinjski trgovec. List, čevljar. Posebno predrzen je bil Franc Kos, vojaški novinec, ker je ta kaplana tikal. Zabavnik Franc je Jožefu Mundi dal zaušnico, Ciril Zabavnik žvižgal. Naj vejo naši potomki za sedanje razmere.<sup>16</sup>*

To dejanje je bilo še eden od zadnjih poskusov uveljavljanja politične moči NS, ki je bila dokončno izgubljena v spopadu z SKZ po vojni.

Borba med obema strankama pa ni bila omejena samo na aktiviste in govornike na shodih. Tudi preprosti ljudje, ki so se čutili pripadnike ene ali druge stranke, so naredili vse, da bi očrnili ali zmanjšali pomen političnih nasprotnikov. Narodnjaka Vekoslav Štampar, kmet iz Lačavesi, in Ivan Lihtenvalner z Gomile sta na nagovor Ivana Plohla, predstojnika z Vitana, na velikem in daleč naokrog znanem proščenju 17. januarja 1910, v cerkvi pri sv. Bolfenku, zadržala meh, da ni bilo mogoče igrati na orgle. K temu dejanju ju je nagovoril Ivan Plohl, občinski predstojnik z Vitana, ki je bila tipično liberalno usmerjena občina. Zagovorniki SKZ so bili močno užaljeni, zato so dejanje prijavili in vsi trije vpleteni so dobili po osem dni zaporne kazni, poravnati pa so morali tudi stroške razprave na sodišču.<sup>17</sup>

Narodna stranka je 1. maja 1910 pri Sv. Bolfenku organizirala shod, na katerem je bil za predsednika izvoljen Franc Zabavnik, drugi liberalni aktivisti pa so bili še njegovi trije bratje Ciril, Jakob in Peter, Lujz Vrabec, Lujz Novak (viničar), Ivan Plohl,

<sup>16</sup> Prav tam.

<sup>17</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Kogu«, *Straža*, letnik 2, št. 80 (Maribor, 15. julija 1910), str. 5.

Ivan Kosi (viničar), Ivan Vogrinec (viničar), Matija Hlebec, Milan Rubin in Alojz Kosi. Shod je organiziral nadučitelj Franc Cajnko, nastopil pa je tudi središki župan Šinko.

Na shodu SKZ 11. junija 1911, na katerem je govoril Dermastija, so nastopili tudi liberalci in nekaj viničarjev, ki so zborovanje ovirali z vpitjem in razgrajanjem.<sup>18</sup> Straža 19. junija tega leta o dogodku ponovno povzema pisanje dopisnika s Koga. Med drugim poroča, da je na shodu govoril profesor trgovinske šole iz Ljubljane g. Dermastija. Zborovalcev je bilo veliko, ker je bil shod po telovski procesiji.

*Med zborovalci je bila »tolpa« Plojašev, ki so hoteli prevpiti govornika. Cvet teh liberalcev je po vrsti tak: Štirje Zabavnikovi sinovi (Ciril, Jakob, Franček in Peter); Lujz Vrabl, ki se je upal metati blato celo v ljubljanskega škofa Jegliča; Lujz Novak, viničar; Franc Polman, mlad nagorski mož; Franc Cajnko, nagorski sin iz Jastrebec; Ivan Plohl, sin občinskega predstavnika na Vitanu; Ivan Kos, viničarski sin; Mürotov sin; Ivan Vogrinec, viničar, Ivan dečko; Mežnarov Nacek (Ignac Robin); Jožef Zadavec, kmet iz Lačavesi; Matija Hlebec, kmet iz Lačavesi in šestnajstletna dečka Milan Robin in Alojzij Kos. Franc Cajnko je prinesel »füčkece«.*<sup>19</sup>

Značilno je bilo, da so se viničarji vedno nagibali k tistim strankam, ki so več obljubliale. Pri državnoborskih volitvah 1911 so to bili narodnjaki, saj je dr. Ploj obljubljal najrazličnejše podpore.

Na teh volitvah je v župniji sv. Bolfenka na Kogu dobil narodnjak Ploj 165 glasov na prvih volitvah, na drugih (ožje) pa 184 glasov. Brenčič (SKZ) je na prvih volitvah dobil 117 glasov, na ožjih pa samo 101 glas. Podrobnejša analiza pokaže naslednjo sliko:

<b>Volišče</b>	<b>Število glasov</b>	
	<b>Brenčič (SKZ)</b>	<b>Ploj (NS)</b>
Kog – Gomila	27 – 25*	81 – 80*
Jastrebc	26 – 18*	22 – 28*
Vitan – Lačaves	22 – 17*	44 – 58*
Vodranci	42 – 41*	18 – 18*

\* Rezultati ožjih volitev

Rezultati »bolfenških« volitev pa niso vplivali na dokončno utrditev položaja SKZ.

<sup>18</sup> »Sv. Bolfenka na Kogu«, *Straža*, letnik 3, št. 59 (Maribor, 19. junija 1911), str. 3.

<sup>19</sup> Prav tam.

Ideje SKZ so se širile po mreži obstoječih župnij, medtem ko so se ideje NS širile iz Središča. Prav zaradi tega je bilo na Kogu toliko političnih bojov med obema strankama. Narodna stranka je počasi izgubljala na svoji moči tudi na Kogu, saj ni bila sposobna organizirati pravega odpora proti SKZ.

18. julija 1913 je imela Mladeniška in dekliška zveza<sup>20</sup> pri sv. Bolfenku svoj mesečni sestanek. Na tem sestanku so ustanovili telovadni odsek Orla za župnijo sv. Bolfenk. Na poti domov so zborovalce napadle »bolfenške tajč gospodične« s kamenjem in posvkami, »katerih so liberalci že vajeni«.<sup>21</sup>

Ob izbruhu I. svetovne vojne je parlamentarno življenje v Avstro-Ogrski prenehalo. Zavladal je strog režim. Politične stranke sicer niso bile razpuščene, vendar so se ukvarjale same s sabo. Konec leta 1917 se je SKZ združila s Slovensko ljudsko stranko (SLS).

Tudi v novi državi so se v Sloveniji ohranili trije politični tabori: socialistični, klerikalni in liberalni s svojimi strankami: Jugoslovanska socialno demokratska stranka (JSDS), Slovenska ljudska stranka (SLS) in Jugoslovanska demokratska stranka (JDS), ki se je pred vojno imenovala Liberalna stranka. Poleg teh strank so ob volitvah nastale tri nove stranke: Samostojna kmetijska stranka (SKS), Narodna socialistična stranka (NSS) in Komunistična stranka. V ptujskem in ljutomerskem okraju je nastopala še Prekmurska liberalna stranka (virstvena).

Na občinskih volitvah leta 1921 v Jastrebcih, na Kogu, Vitanu, Litmerku in v Brebrovniku je SLS dobila 46 odbornikov ali 62,1%, vse ostale stranke pa skupaj 28 ali 27,9% odbornikov. Izjema med omenjenimi občinami je bila le Občina Vitan, kjer je dobila SKS 10 odbornikov ali 62,4%, SLS pa šest odbornikov ali 27,6%. Ponovno se je potrdilo, da je bila Občina Vitan tipična liberalno usmerjena občina, tako kot je to bila že pred vojno.

Šestojanuarska diktatura je prinesla v slovensko politično življenje tako imenovana gibanja. Državnozborske volitve 5. maja 1935 so povzročile val ogorčenja in protestov. Osvroženi Jevtičev velikosrbski režim je, po mnenju ljudi, predvsem pa opozicijskih strank, zmagal s prevaro. Radikali in klerikalci so se posluževali preizkušenih metod podkupovanja in zastraševanja, da bi zadržali oblast. Ponekod so aktiviste združene opozicije na dan volitev celo prijeli in zaprli.

Leta 1936 je prišlo do občinskih volitev na Kogu. Pripadniki JRZ<sup>22</sup> so napeli vse sile, da bi prišli na oblast.<sup>23</sup> Agitacija je bila zelo močna, »izrečenih je bilo veliko očitnih laži«. Jože Kerenčič je menil, da je treba temu napraviti konec.

<sup>20</sup> To je bil podmladek SKZ (opomba avtor).

<sup>21</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Kogu«, *Stráža*, letnik 5, številka 80 (Maribor, 16. julija 1913), str. 3.

<sup>22</sup> JRZ – Jugoslovanska radikalna zajednica je nastala jeseni 1935. Šlo je za vladno stranko (opomba avtorja).

<sup>23</sup> *Zgodovina Slovencev*. (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1979), str. 666.

V novembru 1936 so člani Društva kmečkih fantov in deklet Kog Franc Puklavec, njegov bratranec Martin Puklavec, Ivan Štampar, Stanko Kolbl in Vinko Puklavec stopili v akcijo in s palicami ter pestmi zavezali predolge jezike agitatorjev JRZ. Za ta pretep so člani Društva kmečkih fantov in deklet dobili od 4 do 7 mesecev zapora.<sup>24</sup> V nasprotju z Občino Kog je bila Občina Sv. Miklavž dosti mirnejša.

Vekoslav Štampar, ki je bil kandidat združene opozicije, v časopisu Svobodna Prlekija junija 1955, piše, da so volivce, pristaše vladnih strank, v določenih vinskih kletah gostili, volivci združene opozicije pa so dobivali zaušnice, če niso hitro pobegnili z volišč.

Združena opozicija ni dobila potrebnega števila glasov (kroglic). Po trditvah Adalberta Slekovca na občnem zboru Ptujskega zgodovinskega društva (leta 1964) je na volitvah leta 1935 kar 180 Kogovčanov volilo Listo združene opozicije. Na ptujskem območju, kjer je združeno opozicijo predstavljala Lackova lista, je bilo enako.

Izid petomajskih državnozborskih volitev je prinesel novo razočaranje za delavce in kmete. Ljudje so od obeh kandidatov združene opozicije (Vekoslava Štamparja in Pavla Horvata), ki na volitvah nista uspela, zahtevali, da se začne organizirana akcija za rušenje nove vlade Milana Stojadinovića in Antona Korošca, ki po mnenju ljudi ni bila nič boljša kot prejšnja. Tako je bil 18. avgusta 1935 v Ljutomeru večji shod kmetov, delavcev in viničarjev. Na sicer prepovedanem zborovanju se je zbralo okoli 500 ljudi. Ker je deževalo, je po krajšem govoru Jože Kerenčič iz Jastrebcov razvil prepovedano slovensko zastavo ter korakal na čelu množice po Ljutomeru. Oblast je shod prepovedala, zato je Kerenčič pozval udeležence shoda, naj se ponovno zberejo na zborovanju, ki bo 1. septembra. Sprevod je na koncu zaustavil orožniški kordon in ga s silo razgnal.<sup>25</sup>

Omenjeno zborovanje je bilo samo uvod v politično zborovanje, ki je bilo 1. septembra 1935 v Ljutomeru. Osnovne zahteve ljudi, ki so se udeležili zborovanja, so bile svoboda govora, svoboda tiska, svobodne volitve in druge zahteve po demokratizaciji političnega življenja. Načelnik ljutomerskega sreza je shod prepovedal, vendar se je kljub prepovedi ob 10. uri dopoldne na glavnem trgu zbralo kakšnih tisoč oseb, ki so demonstrirale in vzklikale prepovedana gesla.<sup>26</sup> Orožniški starešina narednik Baltič, ki je bil po rodu Črnogorec, je pozval demonstrante, naj se razidejo. Ker tega niso storili, so pripeljali gasilsko brizgalno in demonstrante poskušali razgnati z vodnimi curki. Iz množice je bilo slišati dva strela, nakar so dvakrat v zrak ustrelili tudi orožniki. Ko so demonstranti začeli na orožnike metati kamenje, so ti začeli streljati v množico. Ubit je bil Alojz Mavrič z Vitana, ranjen pa Medik, prav tako s Sv. Bolfenka na Kogu, ter še dva druga udeleženca zborovanja. Demonstranti so bili

<sup>24</sup> Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20 stoletju ...*, str. 76; glej tudi Franc Puklavec: »Življenjepiš«, arhiv ZZB NOV Ormož.

<sup>25</sup> Drago Novak: *Prlekija 1941–1945*. (Ljubljana: Založba Borec, 1987), str. 46–52.

<sup>26</sup> Nekateri avtorji navajajo podatke, da se je zbralo več tisoč ljudi. Prim., Novak: *Prlekija 1941–1945 ...*, str. 46.

dokončno razbiti in so se razbežali. Revne in objub polne množice so bile še enkrat razočarane nad takratnim režimom.

Kljub množično obiskanemu zborovanju v Ljutomeru, ki je bilo resno opozorilo meščanskim strankam, pa je vpliv vladajoče JRZ na prebivalstvo ostal še vedno odločilen.

Ob propadu Avstro-Ogrske se iz novonastale kraljevine SHS niso izselili vsi pripadniki nemške narodnosti. Posebno močne pozicije so zaradi lastništva vinogradov imeli v Jeruzalemskih goricah. S porastom moči Nemčije, še posebno pa po priključitvi Avstrije, so se začela organizirana gibanja pripadnikov nemške narodnosti. Imeli so vrsto skrivnih sestankov, na enem izmed njih, ki je bil pri Fisherauerju v Jeruzalemu, so baje pripravili načrte za prevzem oblasti.<sup>27</sup>

Splošne razmere in nered, ki je mejil že skoraj na anarhijo, je šel na roko nemškemu gibanju, revščina viničarjev se je spogledovala z nemško blaginjo, tako da nas ne sme presenetiti podatek, da so že leta 1940 nekateri viničarji kurili kresove ob Hitlerjevem rojstnem dnevu. Proti vedno večjemu pritisku nacistične propagande se je kljub vsemu širil upor. Tako so že leta 1936 člani sokolskih društev začeli z dokaj neuspešnim aktivnim odporom. Organiziranih je bilo tudi nekaj manifestacij.<sup>28</sup>

Zadnje volitve v narodno skupščino v stari Jugoslaviji so bile 11. decembra 1938. Prepričljivo zmago na Kogu je dosegla Stojadinovičeva JRZ (Jugoslovanska radikalna zajednica), ki je bila takratna vladajoča stranka. Veliki poraženci pa so bili v Stranki skupne opozicije (Maček, komunisti). Od 405 volilnih upravičencev jih je glasovalo 259, od teh pa kar 219 za Stojadinovičevo JRZ, ki jo je na volitvah zastopal Kranjc. Mačkova Skupna opozicija, ki so jo zastopali Kolarič (34 glasov), Lacko (6 glasov) in Vindiš (0 glasov), je dobila skupaj samo 40 glasov, Ljotičevci, ki jih je zastopal Šega, pa na volitvah na Kogu niso dobili niti enega glasu. Politični boji v Jeruzalemskih goricah so imeli najrazličnejše razsežnosti: od narodnoobrambnih do socialnozdravstvenih.

V času tik pred II. svetovno vojno so ljudje mrzlično iskali izhode iz splošnih težav. Nekaj ljudi je videlo rešitev v revolucionarnih spremembah, nekaj pa v rešitvi, ki naj bi prišla iz hladne severne dežele. Večina ljudi pa je le nemo opazovala, kaj se bo zgodilo.

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<sup>27</sup> Novak: Prlekija 1941–1945 ..., str. 46–52.

<sup>28</sup> Prav tam.

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## **VINCENT CAINKAR IN SNPJ**

V soboto, 18. septembra 1948, sta se predsednik Slovenske narodne podporne jednote (SNPJ) Vincent Cainkar in njegova žena nameravala udeležiti še jednotine prireditve v dvorani zraven sedeža SNPJ na S. Lawndale Avenue v Chicagu, Illinois. Pred začetkom se je Cainkar okrog 21. ure oglasil v svoji pisarni, kjer mu je naenkrat postalo zelo slabo. Glavni zdravnik SNPJ dr. Joseph Zavertnik mu je takoj nudil pomoč. Naslednji dan so ga odpeljali v bolnišnico, kjer so ga operirali zaradi vnetja slepiča. Čeprav so upali, da se bo predsedniku stanje izboljšalo in bo lahko nadaljeval z vodenjem SNPJ-a, je žal pet dni po operaciji umrl. Smrt Vincenta Cainkarja 24. septembra 1948 je pomenila hud udarec za člane SNPJ-a, še težji udarec pa je doživela njegova družina.

Cainkar je bil star 68 let in je bil 29 let predsednik jednote. Bil je prvi predsednik jednote s polnim delovnim časom. Sodelavci so ga poznali kot mirnega diplomata in sposobnega organizatorja; bil je pameten, potrpežljiv in radodaren vodja. Bil je zelo dober govornik, ki je znal pridobiti javnost. V SNPJ so ga cenili kot odličnega pogajalca in mediatorja.

Bil je znan kot prijazen in spoštovan vodja, ki si je z lahkoto pridobival prijatelje. Z veseljem se je udeleževal dogodkov SNPJ, kjer je rad plesal in pel, zaradi česar je bil izredno priljubljen.

Cainkarjeva življenjska pot se je začela skromno. Rojen je bil 22. novembra 1879 v majhni prleški vasi Jastrebcu na Slovenskem. Po odsluženih treh letih v avstro-ogrski vojski se je pridružil mnogim mladim Slovencem in Slovenkam, ki so se leta 1904 izselili v ZDA. Istega leta je bila ustanovljena tudi SNPJ. Naselil se je v predmestju Butler v Pittsburgu v Pensilvaniji, kjer se je poročil z Louis Florjanc. Imela sta štiri otroke. Kasneje se je družina preselila v Poplar Bluff v Misuriju, kjer so najeli farmo, vendar so si dom nazadnje ustvarili v St. Louisu.

Vincent Cainkar se je 1909. leta pridružil SNPJ-u v St. Louisu, kjer je takoj prevzel voditeljsko vlogo. Skupaj z nekaterimi drugimi člani je bil zadolžen za ustanovitev društva »Planinski Raj« št. 107 SNPJ v St. Louisu. Sodelavci in člani so zelo cenili njegove sposobnosti in vztrajnost, zato so ga izvolili za prvega predsednika tega društva. Istega leta je bil izvoljen za delegata na četrti redni konvencijo SNPJ, ki je potekala v Clevelandu. Vsak član si je štel v čast biti izvoljen za predsednika društva ali za delegata na konvencijah. SNPJ je bila v tem času še mlada in šibka zaradi stalnih notranjih bojev nekaj let pred tem.

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph C. Evanish, predsednik SNPJ.

Cainkar je začel svojo pot v bratskih podpornih »jednotah« kot eden prvih pionirjev SNPJ. Bil je vizionar, ki je razumel, kako bistven in pomemben je trenutni in možni prihodnji prispevek SNPJ za ameriško družbo in slovensko-ameriško skupnost.

Njegova iskrena in močna volja pomagati sočloveku ga je pripeljala do najvišjega položaja v SNPJ. Leta 1912 je bil na peti redni konvenciji SNPJ v Milwaukeeju v Wisconsinu izvoljen za predsednika Glavnega nadzornega odbora SNPJ. Na tej konvenciji so ustanovili mladinski oddelek, ki je pomenil nov korak v razvoju bratskih podpornih organizacij.

Na naslednjem kongresu SNPJ, ki je leta 1915 potekal v Pittsburgu, je bil izvoljen za tajnika odbora za lokalne predpise. Ta odbor je bil odgovoren za pripravo amandmajev in popravkov lokalnih predpisov za naslednjo konvencijo. Na isti konvenciji so ustanovili uradno glasilo SNPJ, imenovano *Prosveta*, ki je od leta 1916 izhajala kot dnevnik. S pomočjo teh in še nekaterih drugih odločitev je SNPJ kmalu postala največja slovenska bratska organizacija v ZDA.

Vincent Cainkar je imel leta 1918 glavno vlogo na konvenciji v Springfieldu v Illinoisu, kjer je predsedoval odboru za lokalne predpise. Do takrat so bili glavni predsedniki SNPJ zaposleni samo za polovični čas in v času od ustanovitve so SNPJ vodili štiri različni predsedniki. Ravno na tem kongresu so sprejeli sklep, da bo predsednik zaposlen za polni delovni čas, hkrati pa so izvolili Vincenta Cainkarja za prvega glavnega predsednika.

Cainkar je vodil jednoto skozi obdobja epidemij in grip (npr. španska gripa leta 1919), ki so uničevale celotno državo in povzročile finančno krizo v SNPJ. Bil je več ekonomskih nihanj, med drugimi tudi velika gospodarska kriza 1929, kar je povzročilo finančne težave v jednoti. Ti časi so zajeli tudi obe svetovni vojni, kljub temu pa je SNPJ preživela, uspela in se razcvetela pod vodstvom Vincenta Cainkarja.

Do leta 1917 je SNPJ postala največja slovenska bratska podporna organizacija v Ameriki. Med njegovim tridesetletnim predsedovanjem je število članov naraslo iz okrog 23.000 na več kot 70.000. Povečalo se je tudi premoženje SNPJ od 466.000 dolarjev na kar 13 milijonov dolarjev.

Pod njegovim vodstvom so uresničili veliko nalog in programov, ki so si jih zadali na konvencijah. SNPJ je bila prva med podobnimi slovenskimi organizacijami, ki je leta 1922 začela izdajati mesečno revijo za mladino, imenovano *Mladinski list*. Leta 1945 so ime revije zaradi asimilacije spremenili v *The Voice of Youth*.

Zaradi vodstvenih, diplomatskih in pogajalskih sposobnostih je bil Vincent Cainkar nenadomestljiv pri združitvi dveh pomembnih slovenskih bratskih organizacij z SNPJ; Slovenska delavska podporna zveza se je pridružila leta 1921, Slovenska svobodomiselna podporna zveza pa leta 1941.

Leta 1924 je bila ustanovljena tiskarna SNPJ, kar je omogočilo podporo in napredovanje dnevnika Prosveta. V tiskarni so za jednoto tiskali tudi različne obrazce, pisemski papir in drug natisnjen material, kar je olajšalo njeno delo.

Za razvoj jednote je bil potreben dodaten prostor na sedežu SNPJ. Zgradbo, ki so jo zgradili leta 1916, so dogradili najprej leta 1924 in nato še leta 1936.

Cainkar je ob rednem predsedniškem delu pogosto vodil akcije za zbiranje pomoči stari domovini v primeru naravnih nesreč ali zaradi posledic vojn. Aktivno je sodeloval še v drugih programih pomoči za staro domovino. Humanitarno delovanje jednote je odraz vseh članov SNPJ.

Cainkar je verjel v pomembnost ustanavljanja in spodbujanja mladinskih programov. To je bilo zanj zagotovilo, da bodo prihodnje generacije sčasoma prevzele voditeljske vloge. V času Cainkarjevega predsedovanja je jednota spodbujala in izvajala te programe sočasno z gibanjem English Speaking movement, ki se je začelo leta 1925 in je omogočilo boljšo prihodnost jednote.



*Glavni stan SNPJ v času predsednikovanja Vincenta Cainkarja.*

Osebni razvoj in vplivi iz mladosti so v njem pustile globoko zakoreninjene vrednote tistega časa. Na njegova socialno-demokratska prepričanja so vplivala evrop-

ska socialno-demokratska gibanja. Naklonjenost preprostem delavnemu človeku je izvirala iz njegovih izkušenj in realnosti življenja, saj so bili delovni pogoji v tem času zelo slabi. Vincent Cainkar in ustanovitelji SNPJ so spodbujali ideale preprostih delavnih ljudi in vztrajno podpirali delavsko gibanje.

V prvih letih po ustanovitvi je jednota doživela veliko notranjih preprirov, kar je oslabilo SNPJ. Med člani je prihajalo do razlik v mišljenju in do sporov za moč in prevlado. Vincent Cainkar se je pridružil SNPJ v kritičnem trenutku in prav on je prinesel stabilnost organizaciji, ko jo je ta najbolj potrebovala. Njegova iskrena želja je bila delati za dobro SNPJ in ne za svoje lastne interese. To prepričanje je posredoval jednoti in vsem, ki so ga obkrožali.

V naslednjih letih je preudarno vodil SNPJ skozi zahtevne ekonomske in politične razmere. Diplomatsko je ravnal z najbolj inteligentnimi in trmastimi posamezniki v jednoti, stari domovini, slovensko-ameriški skupnosti, politični areni in delavskem gibanju.

Vincent Cainkar ni bil diktator, saj je resnično verjel v svobodo misli in v demokratski proces. Večino odločitev so sprejemali izvršni odbor SNPJ, glavni odbor, konvencije in občasno člani Jednote na referendumu. V 29-ih letih je kot predsednik SNPJ predsedoval še glavnemu izvršilnemu odboru in nacionalnemu odboru.

Od leta 1918 pa vse do njegove smrti 1948 so ga na vsaki konvenciji izvolili za predsednika SNPJ. Kasneje noben uradnik v SNPJ ni deloval tako dolgo kot Vincent Cainkar. Med praznovanjem 90. obletnice jednote in odprtjem novega sedeža SNPJ leta 1994 v mestu Imperial v Pensilvaniji so upravno pisarno te zgradbe posvetili Vincentu Cainkarju, za njegove pomembne dosežke in prispevke jednoti.

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- Zapisniki in poročila konvencij SNPJ.

## VINCENT CAINKAR IN STARA DOMOVINA

### Uvod

Vincent Cainkar je eden mnogih slovenskih izseljencev, ki so se v ZDA naselili pred že prvo svetovno vojno. Večina Slovencev se je v ZDA priselila ob koncu 19. in v začetku 20. stoletja, manjši del pa se jih je naselil tudi po drugi svetovni vojni kot politični begunci.



Zemljevid Slovenskih naselbin v ZDA.

Tu so ustvarili skoraj 800 slovenskih etničnih naselbin. Slovenska naselbina predstavlja del nekega naselja z zgostitvenim slovenskim poselitvenim jedrom, v katerem je obstajala vsaj ena od etničnih organizacijskih struktur – društvo bratskih

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Matjaž Klemenčič, redni profesor za novejšo in sodobno zgodovino na Filozofski fakulteti Univerze v Mariboru.

podpornih organizacij, slovenski narodni dom, slovenska ali mešana katoliška oziroma evangeličanska etnična župnija ali pa uredništvo slovenskega etničnega časopisa.<sup>2</sup>

Ob tem je treba ugotoviti, da približno tri četrtine slovenskih priseljencev v ZDA in njihovih potomcev še danes živi v mestih, kjer so se v preteklosti izoblikovale slovenske etnične naselbine.

Osnovno obliko organiziranosti slovenskih izseljencev v ZDA so predstavljale bratske podporne organizacije. Šlo je za neke vrste zavarovalniških družb, ki so nastale v obdobju, ko ZDA še niso poznale nobene oblike zavarovanja, in so se kot takšne obdržale vse do danes. Delavcem so nudile zavarovanje v primeru nesreč pri delu ali v primeru bolezni. Z dobičkom so te organizacije podpirale kulturno in izdajateljsko dejavnost slovenskih izseljencev v ZDA. Gre za centralizirane organizacije, sestavljene iz posameznih društev, ki so delovala ali še delujejo v slovenskih naselbinah. Še danes delujejo Ameriška bratska zveza/American Fraternal Union, s sedežem v Elyju v Minnesoti, z okrog 15.000 člani slovenskega porekla, Ameriška dobrodelna zveza/American Mutual Life Association, s sedežem v Clevelandu v Ohiju, z okrog 30.000 člani, Slovenska narodna podpora jednota/Slovene National Benefit Society/, s sedežem v Imperialu v Pensilvaniji, z več kot 50.000 člani, Zapadna Slovenska zveza/Western Slavonic Association, s sedežem v Denverju v Koloradu, s 6500 člani ter Ameriško-slovenska katoliška jednota/American-Slovenian Catholic Union, s sedežem v Jolietu v Illinoisu, z okrog 30.000 člani večinoma slovenskega porekla. Relativno precejšnje število krovnih organizacij je bila na eni strani posledica razpršenosti slovenske poselitve v ZDA, na drugi pa posledica ideoloških razlik, ki so bile deloma prinesene iz stare domovine, deloma pa so jih vzpodbudile razmere v novi domovini. Ameriško-slovenska katoliška jednota, nekoč imenovana Kranjsko slovenska katoliška jednota, je od svojih članov zahtevala, da so aktivni katoliki, medtem ko je imela SNPJ vernost ali nevernost posameznih članov za njihovo zasebno zadevo. SNPJ se je zavzemala za socialne pravice ameriških delavcev, mnogi njeni člani pa so bili aktivni v socialističnem delavskem gibanju v ZDA. V zgodovini te organizacije so se med njenim članstvom in vodstvom kazale tudi liberalne ideje.<sup>3</sup>

Poleg bratskih podpornih organizacij so se slovenski izseljenci združevali še v okviru narodnih domovi in katoliške ter protestantske Cerkve, s pomočjo katerih so ustanovili tako imenovane etnične župnije.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Slovenske naselbine v Združenih državah Amerike«. V: Milica Trebše-Štolfa in Matjaž Klemenčič (ur.): *Slovensko izseljenstvo: zbornik ob 50-letnici Slovenske izseljenske matice*. (Ljubljana: Združenje Slovenska izseljenska matica, 2001), str. 179–186.

<sup>3</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Fraternal Benefit Societies and the Slovene Immigrants in the United States of America«. V: Matjaž Klemenčič (ur.): *Etnični fraternalizem v priseljenjskih deželah = Ethnic Fraternalism in Immigrant Countries*. (Maribor: Univerza v Mariboru, 1994), str. 21–31.

<sup>4</sup> Darko Friš: *Ameriški Slovenci in katoliška cerkev 1871–1924*. (Celovec, Ljubljana, Dunaj: Mohorjeva založba, 1995); Klemenčič, »Slovenske naselbine ...«, str. 182–183.

Zgodovino slovenskih izseljencev po priselitvi v nove domovine je mogoče razdeliti na dva dela, in sicer: (1) na zgodovino dejavnosti v okviru posebnih organizacij v novi domovini ter na (2) zgodovino njihove politične dejavnosti v zvezi s staro domovino. V obeh primerih gre za del slovenske zgodovine in del zgodovine priseljenjskih držav. Ob političnih aktivnostih slovenskih izseljencev v zvezi s staro domovino je treba poudariti, da so slovenski izseljenci lahko oblikovali le politične programe in predlagali nekatere rešitve za staro domovino, ki pa jih je moral slovenski narod izbojevati na svojih tleh sam.<sup>5</sup>

Pri vzpodbujanju politične dejavnosti slovenskih izseljencev v zvezi s staro domovino so pomembno vlogo odigrali zlasti tisti posamezniki, ki so imeli vodilne vloge v organizacijah slovenskih izseljencev. Eden takšnih je bil tudi Vincent Cainkar, ki je po pisanju nekaterih slovenskih časopisov, ki so izhajali v ZDA, imel »... v sebi ... mnogo volje in odločnosti, da se udejestvi [sic!] v javnem življenju med slovenskimi naseljenci, da jim pomaga na polju društvenega življenja«. <sup>6</sup> Cainkar, ki je bil leta 1909 med ustanovitelji društva »Planinski Raj« št. 107 Slovenske narodne podporne jednote (SNPJ) v St. Louisu v Missouriju,<sup>7</sup> se je že sredi oktobra istega leta udeležil četrte redne konvencije SNPJ v Clevelandu,<sup>8</sup> in bil izvoljen za predsednika glavnega nadzornega odbora.<sup>9</sup>



4. konvencija SNPJ.

<sup>5</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Slovenska izseljenska zgodovina kot del slovenske nacionalne zgodovine: inavguralno predavanje ob izvolitvi v naziv rednega profesorja na Oddelku za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 8. 4. 1998«, *Zgodovinski časopis*, letnik 52 (1988), št. 2, str. 180.

<sup>6</sup> »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju«, *Glas naroda*, letnik 56, št. 193 (New York, 5. oktobra 1948), str. 3.

<sup>7</sup> »SNPJ Mourns Passing of Supreme President Cainkar«, *Prosveta*, letnik 40, št. 191 (Chicago, 29. septembra 1948), str. 1.

<sup>8</sup> »Veličasten pogreb Vincenta Cainkarja«, *Prosveta*, letnik 40, št. 191 (Chicago, 29. septembra 1948), str. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Jože Zavertnik: *Ameriški Slovenci: pregled splošne zgodovine Združenih držav, slovenskega naseljevanja in nasebin ter Slovenske narodne podporne jednote*. (Chicago: Slovenska narodna podpora jednote, 1925), str. 583.

Od tedaj dalje je bil na vsaki konvenciji izvoljen na kakšen pomembnejši položaj v SNPJ. Na peti redni konvenciji, 16. septembra 1912, v Milwaukeeju v Wisconsinu je bil izvoljen za namestnika glavnega tajnika in blagajnika jednote,<sup>10</sup> na šesti, septembra 1915 v Pittsburghu v Pensilvaniji, v odbor za pripravo pravil jednote (skupaj z Ivanom Molkom, Martinom Železnikarjem, Johnom Gorškom in Petrom Geshellom),<sup>11</sup> na sedmi redni konvenciji, 16. septembra 1918, v Springfieldu v Illinoisu pa za predsednika jednote.<sup>12</sup> Bil je zelo priljubljen med člani SNPJ, zato je bil po letu 1918 vsakič znova izvoljen za predsednika jednote. SNPJ je tako vodil skoraj trideset let, vse do smrti, 24. septembra 1948. Kot je zapisal Glas naroda, je bil Cainkar, tako kot »... večina naših vidnih ljudi med slovenskim naseljenci v Ameriki ... samouk – to se pravi, nabiral si je znanja ob delovanju za javnost, za Jednoto in društvene zadeve«.<sup>13</sup>

### **Vincent Cainkar in prva svetovna vojna**

Cainkar, ki je po navedbah slovenskih časopisov »nosil v sebi precej določeno oblikovano načelo socialne zavesti, ki človeku narekuje delovanje v prid ljudskih množic«,<sup>14</sup> je med prvo svetovno vojno z zaskrbljenostjo spremljal dogajanja v stari domovini. Podobno kot nekateri drugi člani SNPJ se je vključil v gibanje za nastanek demokratične politične tvorbe jugoslovanskih narodov, ki sta ga vzpodbudila revolucija v Rusiji leta 1917 in vstop ZDA v vojno. Gibanje se je avgusta 1917 poimenovalo Slovensko republičansko združenje. Že septembra 1918 se je Cainkar kot zastopnik lokalne organizacije iz St. Louisa v Missouriju udeležil konvencije tega združenja.<sup>15</sup>

Slovensko republičansko združenje, ki se je zavzemalo za ustanovitev Jugoslavije kot zvezne republike po ameriškem vzoru, v okviru katere bi imela Slovenija status avtonomne republike,<sup>16</sup> je že od konca leta 1917 začelo zbirati denar za »Milijondolarski sklad«. Namenjen je bil za propagiranje republikanske ureditve v stari domovini ter za propagando v zvezi z mejnim vprašanjem.<sup>17</sup> Že od konca leta 1918 je združenje usmerilo večino svojih prizadevanj v pravično rešitev mejnega vprašanja, zlasti na Primorskem. Organiziralo je zbiranje podpisov »v obrambo slovenske zemlje« in izdalo posebno številko *The Slovenian Review*, v kateri je bil podrobno opisan zlasti položaj Slovencev na Primorskem. Utemeljili so tudi zahtevo po ugodni

<sup>10</sup> Prav tam, str. 588.

<sup>11</sup> Prav tam, str. 603

<sup>12</sup> Prav tam, str. 613.

<sup>13</sup> »Veličasten pogreb Vincenta Cainkarja« ..., str. 3.

<sup>14</sup> »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju« ..., str. 3.

<sup>15</sup> Anton J. Terbovec, »Druga redna konvencija Slovenskega republičanskega združenja«, *Prosveta*, letnik 11, št. 211 (Chicago, 9. septembra 1918), str. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji: naseljevanje zemljepisna razprostranjenost in odnos ameriških Slovencev do stare domovine od sredine 19. stoletja do konca druge svetovne vojne*. (Maribor: Založba Obzorja, 1987), str. 114–115.

<sup>17</sup> *Spominska knjiga: prva serija prostovoljnega narodnega davka*. (New York in Washington: Studia Slovenica, 1971), str. 55.



rešitvi jadranskega vprašanja, oziroma da bi Primorska pripadla novoustanovljeni jugoslovanski državi.<sup>18</sup> Revijo, ki je izšla v sto tisoč izvodih, so člani združenja poslali mnogim evropskim in ameriškim vladnim predstavnikom ter voditeljem in članom društev v vseh večjih slovenskih naselbinah, ki so jo nato posredovali ameriškim lokalnim politikom.<sup>19</sup>

S svojimi aktivnostmi za staro domovino je Slovensko republičansko združenje že med prvo svetovno vojno pridobilo med ameriški Slovenci precej podpornikov. Ko se je ob pomoči slovenske agitacije gibanje proti koncu prve svetovne vojne razširilo tudi med ameriški Hrvati, je bilo najprej ustanovljeno Hrvatsko republikansko udruženje, aprila 1919 pa je bilo ustanovljeno še Jugoslovansko republičansko združenje. To združenje so podpirali tudi srbski socialisti v ZDA.<sup>20</sup>

### **Obdobje med obema svetovnima vojnama**

Cainkar je bil kot predsednik SNPJ septembra 1919 sopodpisnik spomenice »Apel predsedniku i narodu SAD u odbranu jugoslavenskog naroda«, ki jo je dvanajst bratskih podpornih organizacij jugoslovanskih izseljencev iz ZDA naslovilo na ameriškega predsednika Woodrowa Wilsona. Podpisniki spomenice, ki je predstavljala vrh prizadevanj jugoslovanskih Američanov za pravično rešitev meja nove jugoslovanske države,<sup>21</sup> so ugotavljali, da bo prepustitev zahodnih delov slovenskega in hrvaškega etničnega ozemlja Italiji negativno vplivala na mir in sožitje med narodi v Evropi. V zvezi s tem so opozorili, da so se razmere »na tem koncu sveta v času od podpisa londonskega sporazuma leta 1915 do marca 1920 zelo spremenile«. Pri tem so imeli v mislih razpad Avstro-Ogrske in nastanek več novih držav, med njimi tudi jugoslovanske. V spomenici so bile posebej poudarjene posledice italijanske aneksije Primorske, saj bi za Slovence »... pomenila odcepitev okrog 400 tisoč jugoslovanskih duš od njihovega skupnega števila okrog 1.500.000 prebivalcev smrti udarec ...«. Poleg gospodarskih posledic so v spomenici izražene še želje po »... zdravi osnovi za bodoče prijateljske odnose med vsemi narodi, še posebej med Jugoslavlani in Italijani ...«, saj bi se samo v tem primeru lahko uresničili »... slavni ideali, za katere je človeštvo krvavelo in umiralo ...« med prvo svetovno vojno.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Prim., *The Slovenian Review - Official Organ of Slovenian Republican Alliance*, letnik 2, št. 4 (Chicago, 1. decembra 1918).

<sup>19</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, pp. 118–119.

<sup>20</sup> »Jugoslovansko republičansko združenje«, *Prosveta*, letnik 12, št. 84 (Chicago, 9. april 1919), str. 4; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 119.

<sup>21</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Vloga Mihajla Idvorskega Pupina v političnem življenju srbskih in ostalih jugoslovanskih izseljencev v ZDA pred in med prvo svetovno vojno in njegova prizadevanja za jugoslovanske meje po prvi svetovni vojni«. V: Vladimir Klemenčič (ur.): *Mihajlo I. Pupin: znanstvenik, politik, gospodarstvenik*. (Ljubljana: Inštitut za geografijo Univerze Edvarda Kardelja in Zveza organizacij za tehnično kulturo Slovenije, 1980), str. 54.

<sup>22</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 131; Klemenčič, »Vloga Mihajla Idvorskega Pupina v političnem življenju ...«, str. 55.

Zahtevo po »pravični« rešitvi jadranskega vprašanja oziroma za priključitev slovenskega Primorja, Istre, Kvarnerskih otokov ter Dalmacije k Jugoslaviji so člani Slovenskega republičanskega združenja v sodelovanju z drugimi jugoslovanskimi organizacijami poslali tudi pariški mirovni konferenci. V spomenici so podrobno opisali narodnostne razmere, ki so vladale v primorskih pokrajinah, in opozorili, da bi aneksija čisto slovenskih in hrvaških ozemelj ».. preokupirala Italijo z narodnostnim vprašanjem, s katerim ni domača in kar bi samo povečalo notranje težave«. <sup>23</sup>

Slovensko (od aprila 1919 Jugoslovansko) republičansko gibanje je zbiralo tudi materialno pomoč stari domovini. Z delom denarja, ki ga je združenje zbralo za politično akcijo v pomoč stari domovini, je bila v Ljubljani kupljena Blaznikova tiskarna, ki je propadla med gospodarsko krizo v 30. letih 20. stoletja. <sup>24</sup> Pri zbiranju pomoči je sodelovala tudi SNPJ na podlagi prostovoljnih prispevkov članov, za katere je vodstvo SNPJ svoje članstvo nagovarjalo v številnih člankih v Prosveti.

Ko se razmejitev z Italijo na Primorskem in z Avstrijo na Koroškem ni iztekla v korist nove jugoslovanske države in se ni uresničila niti ideja jugoslovanske zvezne republike, je Jugoslovansko republikansko gibanje v ZDA po konvenciji leta 1921 prenehalo delovati, kar nekaj denarja, ki je bil namenjen politični akciji, pa je bilo izročeno v upravljanje SNPJ in Jugoslovanske socialistične zveze. <sup>25</sup> Med drugo svetovno vojno so del tega denarja porabili za politično akcijo Slovensko-ameriškega narodnega sveta.

Ameriški Slovenci so stike s staro domovino ohranili tudi med obema svetovnima vojnoma. Pomembno vlogo pri tem je imel časopis *Prosveta*, ki ga je izdajala SNPJ, in je ob prispevkih o razmerah v ZDA ter v Evropi objavljala še poročila o družtenih zadevah in vesti iz »starega kraja«. Med zadnjimi so prevladovali novice o »navadnih« ljudeh, medtem ko vesti o političnem življenju v domovini, razen ob večjih krizah, skoraj ni bilo zaslediti. Časopis je imel precejšen vpliv na življenje znotraj slovenske etnične skupnosti in je v tem času opravljal tri pomembne funkcije: vzdrževal je vezi s staro domovino, posredoval informacije o novi in informacije o slovenskih izseljencih v ZDA. To je slovenskim priseljencem v ZDA dajalo občutek pripadnosti svoji stari domovini, kljub temu da so živeli več tisoč kilometrov v stran. <sup>26</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 133.

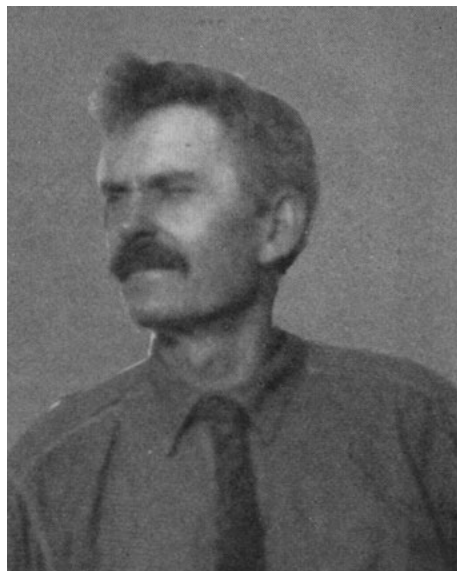
<sup>24</sup> Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. Serija Jugoslav Republican Alliance, Box 2; Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. Serija Yugoslav Socialist Alliance, box 22–26; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 135.

<sup>25</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 132–135.

<sup>26</sup> Klemenčič Matjaž, »Slovene Periodicals in the USA, 1891–1920«, *Razprave in gradivo*, št. 55 (2008), str. 109–110; Nives Sulič, »Izseljenski časopis Prosveta skozi prizmo etnologa«, *Znanstvena revija - Humanistika*, letnik 3 (1991), št. 2, str. 333–339.



Ivan Molek.



Jože Zavertnik.

Kljub temu da je *Prosveta* le redko poročala o političnih dogodkih v stari domovini, so bili v SNPJ dobro seznanjeni s pomembnimi političnimi dogodki. To dokazuje tudi resolucija, sprejeta na 9. redni konvenciji SNPJ v Chicagu, ki je potekala med 19. in 25. majem 1929. V njej so obsodili odpravo parlamentarne demokracije in uvedbo tako imenovane »šestojanuarske diktature« v Jugoslaviji ter pozvali k ponovni organizaciji političnih strank in sindikatov. V resoluciji so izrazili tudi željo, da bi Jugoslavijo preimenovali v Balkansko federacijo in jo razdelili v več republik.<sup>27</sup>

Vezi z domovino so ohranjali tudi na druge načine. Tako je Ivan Molek urednik *Prosvete* poskrbel, da je knjiga *Dinamit*,<sup>28</sup> ameriškega pisatelja slovenskega porekla Louisa Adamiča, za katero je prejel Guggenheimovo nagrado, prišla v ljubljansko univerzitetno knjižnico.<sup>29</sup> Pomembni so bili tudi organizirani izleti v staro domovino. Enega takšnih je leta 1932 organizirala SNPJ, ko so se voditelji kulturnega in političnega življenja ameriških Slovencev sestali s pomembnimi osebnostmi slovenskega kulturnega življenja v stari domovini.<sup>30</sup> Ta navezanost na staro domovino in zainteresiranost za dogodke v njej, ki sta bili najmočnejše prisotni zlasti pri prvi generaciji ameriških Slovencev, kateri je pripadal tudi Cainkar, sta bili ključnega pomena za politično odločanje ameriških Slovencev med drugo svetovno vojno.

<sup>27</sup> Jay Sedmak: *An Inspired Journey. The SNPJ Story: The First One Hundred Years of the Slovene National Benefit Society*. (Imperial, Pennsylvania: Slovene National Benefit Society, 2004), str. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Louis Adamič: *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America*. (New York: Viking Press, 1934).

<sup>29</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 136.

<sup>30</sup> Ivan Molek: *Slovene Immigrant History 1900–1950: Autobiographical Sketches*. (Dover, Delaware: Mary Molek, 1979), str. 227–232; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 136.

## Vincent Cainkar in druga svetovna vojna

Ko so Nemčija, Italija in njune zaveznice aprila 1941 napadle in okupirale Jugoslavijo, so slovenski izseljenci v ZDA ostro reagirali na genocidno nasilje v domovini. Vincent Cainkar je bil med prvimi, ki so se zavzeli za pomoč Slovincem v stari domovini. Tako je Prosveta že 16. aprila 1941 objavila »Apel za pomoč trpečim v starem kraju«. V njem je najprej ugotovila, da so:

*»... podivjane horde brezobzirnih krvnikov že udrle (sic!) čez mejo na več krajih, kjer pobijajo nedolžne ljudi ter pustošijo in nadaljujejo po jugoslovanskem ozemlju s svojim krvavim vandalskim delom. To pa znači, da bo storjena velikanska škoda, mnogo bo uničenega, kar je najpotrebnejše za življenje ... To znači nadalje, da bo spet naša materialna pomoč zelo potrebna ...*

*Potrebno je torej, bratje in sestre ter dragi rojaki, da spet odpremo naša "srca in roke", ter začnemo zbirati sklad za pomoč trpečim bratom in sestram v starem kraju. Potrebno je, da se organiziramo in dobro pripravimo, da bi naša pomožna akcija toliko bolj uspešna ...«.<sup>31</sup>*

Ameriški Slovenci in njihove organizacije so se hitro odzvale pozivu Prosvete. Predstavniki bratskih podpornih organizacij so tako že 19. aprila na predlog Ameriške bratske zveze ustanovili Jugoslovanski pomožni odbor - slovensko sekcijo (JPO-SS). Na seji, ki je potekala pod Cainkarjevim vodstvom v konferenčni sobi SNPJ v Chicagu,<sup>32</sup> so v posebni »Izjavi ameriškim Slovincem« med drugim zapisali:

*»... Mi bi bili ne vredni svobode in zaščite, ki jo uživamo v demokratični Ameriki ... - če ne bi, zgroženi nad velehudodelstvom, izvršenim z nepopisnim cinizmom nad Jugoslavijo, najogorčenej obsodili tega barbarstva nacijske Nemčije ...*

*Toda mi se zavedamo, da samo ogorčenje in samo simpatije ne zadostujejo. Naša stara domovina potrebuje v tem momentu veliko več ...*

*V tem smislu in na direktivo izvršnih odborov naših podpornih organizacij smo se tega dne zbrali, da položimo čvrst temelj pomožni akciji za najbednejše v Jugoslaviji v trdnem upanju, da ta naša akcija doseže svoj namen, da doseže naše najpotrebnejše rojake v starem kraju brez razlike, kaj so in kdo so, da jih doseže brez ovir in diskriminacij takoj ali čim prej bo to fizično mogoče«.<sup>33</sup>*

V izjavi so med drugim opredelili tudi cilje JPO-SS:

<sup>31</sup> Vincent Cainkar, »Apel za pomoč trpečim v starem kraju.« *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 75 (Chicago, 16. aprila 1941), str. 1.

<sup>32</sup> »Zborovanje slovenskih podpornih organizacij dne 19. aprila 1941 v gl. stanu SNPJ, Chicago, Illinois«. *Amerikanski Slovenec*, letnik 50, št. 84 (Joliet, 30. aprila 1941), str. 5.

<sup>33</sup> »Ameriški Slovincem: Izjava Jugoslovanskega pomožnega odbora, organiziranega v Chicagu 19. aprila 1941«, *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 80 (Chicago, 21. aprila 1941), str.1.

- »Ustanovitev osrednjega odbora, ki naj v imenu in pod kontrolo naših podpornih organizacij vodi pomožno akcijo med ameriškimi Slovenci za našo staro domovino; ta odbor naj bo vez med organizacijami ameriških Slovencev in ameriškim Rdečim križem ali med katero koli oblastjo Združenih držav, s katero bodo naše zveze potrebne; ta odbor lahko sodeluje tudi z enakima odboroma Hrvatov in Srbov, tako da bodo vse jugoslovanske narodnosti solidarne v tem oziru;
- sprejem denarnih prispevkov, nabranih pod kontrolo podpornih organizacij in poročanje o prispevkih v glasilih podpornih organizacij. Odbor bo odgovoren slovenskim narodnim podpornim organizacijam in bo vodil 'publiciteto' v glasilih organizacij in ostalih listih, ki naj bodo obenem glasila jugoslovanske pomožne akcije;
- odbor se bo strogo kretal v mejah svoje humanitarne dejavnosti in bo pazil, da ga nihče ne bo izkoristil v kakšne politične ali druge namene; sploh, da stori vse, kar mu nalože naše podporne organizacije, katerim je odgovoren«.<sup>34</sup>

Za predsednika JPO-SS je bil izvoljen Vincent Cainkar, glavni predsednik SNPJ.<sup>35</sup> JPO-SS je predstavljal prvo skupno akcijo katoliško in liberalno usmerjenih ameriško-slovenskih voditeljev med drugo svetovno vojno. Do tega sodelovanja je prišlo po zaslugi Josepha Zalarja, takratnega sekretarja Kranjsko-slovenske katoliške jednote. Ker pa se o tem prej ni posvetoval z drugimi voditelji slovenskih katoliških izseljenskih organizacij, je to sodelovanje vzbudilo precej kritik. Zlasti ostri so bili slovenski duhovniki, ki so delovali v ZDA in so oktobra 1942 kritizirali zlasti dejstvo, da je bila ustanovna seja v »središču svobodomiselnih ameriških Slovencev« (v konferenčni sobi SNPJ), in da je bil za predsednika JPO-SS izbran glavni predsednik SNPJ, Vincent Cainkar.

10. maja 1941 so se na pobudo Hrvatske bratske zajednice zbrali v Slovenskem narodnem domu v Clevelandu tudi predstavniki vseh hrvaških, srbskih in slovenskih narodnih podpornih organizacij in sklenili, da bodo uskladili akcijo v zvezi z nabiranjem sredstev za pomoč stari domovini. Iz slovenske, hrvaške in srbske sekcije so ustanovili Jugoslovanski pomožni odbor. Njegov predsednik je postal podpredsednik Hrvatske bratske zajednice William M. Boyd (Boić), podpredsednika pa Vincent Cainkar in Sime Vrljinić.<sup>36</sup> JPO-SS je kmalu organiziral podružnice po vse pomembnejših slovenskih naselbinah v ZDA.

<sup>34</sup> Prav tam.

<sup>35</sup> »Jugoslovanski pomožni odbor«, *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 78 (Chicago, 21. aprila 1941), str. 1; »Zborovanje slovenskih podpornih organizacij dne 19. aprila 1941 v gl. stanu SNPJ, Chicago, Illinois«. *Amerikanski Slovenec*, letnik 50, št. 84 (Joliet, 30. aprila 1941), str. 5.

<sup>36</sup> »Resolucija o svrhi, sestavi in načinu dela Jugoslovanskega pomožnega odbora v Ameriki«, *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 108 (Chicago, 4. junija 1941), str. 3; Stjepan Lojen: *Uspomene jednog iseljenika*. (Zagreb: Znanje, 1963), str. 208.

V turobnem vzdušju druge svetovne vojne je sredi septembra 1941 potekala 12. redna konvencija SNPJ. Zaradi vojne v Evropi so delegati del razprave posvetili razkosanju Jugoslavije, še posebej pa okupaciji in razkosanju jugoslovanske Slovenije med Nemčijo, Italijo ter Madžarsko. Sprejeli so resolucijo v petih točkah, v kateri so:

1. obsodili fašizem in nacizem ter izrazili upanje v demokracijo;
2. pozdravili podporo Rooseveltove administracije Veliki Britaniji in Sovjetski zvezi v njihovem boju proti Nemčiji ter Italiji;
3. potrdili podporo Sloveniji in pomoč pri obnovi Jugoslavije po koncu vojne;
4. izrazili svoje strinjanje z aktivnostmi jugoslovanske vlade v prizadevanjih za osvoboditev države (takrat so zaradi pomanjkanja informacij iz stare domovine Mihailoviča obravnavali kot vodjo osvobodilnega gibanja); in
5. glavnemu odboru SNPJ ter *Prosveti* ukazali, naj med organizacijami ameriških Slovencev zagotovijo čim širšo podporo za uresničevanje prvih štirih točk resolucije.<sup>37</sup>

S posebnima resolucijama so udeleženci konvencije podprli tudi izvršni odbor SNPJ v podpori JPO-SS in zagotovili ohranitev članstva v SNPJ vsem, ki so bili vpoklicani v ameriško vojsko. Vpoklicanih je bilo okrog tisoč članov SNPJ, med njimi tudi podpredsednik SNPJ Michael Kumer, ki pa so vsi kljub vpoklicu obdržali članstvo v jednoti, Kumer pa tudi položaj podpredsednika SNPJ.<sup>38</sup>

Že od prve seje JPO-SS naprej so njeni člani razmišljali, kako bi med ameriški Slovenci začeli politično akcijo v zvezi s staro domovino. K tej so jih spodbujali ljudje, ki so prišli iz Jugoslavije tik pred okupacijo (člani jugoslovanske emigrantske vlade, pater Kazimir Zakrajšek, pater Bernard Ambrožič itd.). Vprašanje politične akcije med ameriški Slovenci je Cainkar načel na seji JPO-SS, 16. oktobra 1941, ko je navzoče opozoril, »da se prav nič ne ve, kako se bodo v bližnji bodočnosti zaobrile razmere, in tisti čas nas [ameriške Slovence – op. M.K.] ne sme najti nepripravljene, ko se bodo spet določale meje in usoda Slovenije«. Zastopniki posameznih narodnih podpornih organizacij so se strinjali s Cainkarjem, da bi se pod pokroviteljstvom JPO-SS »lahko vodilo tudi politično akcijo za stari kraj«, o čemer pa bi naj dokončno odločili glavni odbori organizacij, ki tvorijo JPO-SS. Na nujnost politične akcije med ameriški Slovenci je opozoril tudi minister jugoslovanske vlade v izgnanstvu Franc Snoj, ki je prišel v dvorano po seji JPO-SS. V daljšem govoru je pojasnil razmere v Sloveniji in svetu ter stališče jugoslovanske vlade v izgnanstvu v Londonu in obljubil, da bo sam pozval slovenske podporne organizacije k sodelovanju v politični akciji.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Sedmak: *An Inspired Journey ...*, str. 56–57; »Dvanajsta redna konvencija SNPJ: Enajsta seja, 19. septembra«, *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 191 (Chicago, 1. oktobra 1941), str. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Sedmak: *An Inspired Journey ...*, str. 59–60; »Dvanajsta redna konvencija SNPJ ...«, str. 3.

<sup>39</sup> »Vesti s seje pomožnega odbora«, *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 204 (Chicago, 20. oktobra 1941), str. 1; »Urednikove pripombe: Politična akcija za staro domovino«, *Prosveta*, letnik 33, št. 204 (Chicago, 20. oktobra 1941), str. 4.

Cainkar je sestanek zastopnikov slovenskih narodnih podpornih in političnih organizacij sklical 15. novembra 1941. Poleg njega so se sestanka udeležili še predstavniki SNPJ (Ivan Molek, glavni urednik *Prosvete*), KSKJ (Joseph Zalar), ABZ (Janko Rogelj, Anton Zbašnik, Frank Vraničar), Zapadnoslovenske zveze (Leo Jurjevec), Družbe svete družine (John Vidic), Slovenske ženske zveze (Marie Priland, Mary Tomažin) in Jugoslovanske socialistične zveze (Etbin Kristan, Frank Zaitz). Kot zastopnik SNPJ je Ivan Molek podal predlog osnove za politično akcijo med ameriškimi Slovenci in poudaril:

- *»pripravljenost ameriških Slovencev, da z vsemi močmi podprejo zaveznike v boju s fašizmom, saj bo le z njihovo zmago prišlo tudi do osvoboditve Slovencev;*
- *ker so nam oficialni zastopniki Slovencev v starem kraju povedali, da je politična bodočnost odvisna od nas ameriških Slovencev, da moramo mi govoriti namesto njih, ko morajo oni tamkaj molčati, ter nas opozorili, da je prišel čas, ko lahko pričnemo politično akcijo v stari domovini v prid Rooseveltu in predstavnikom Anglije in Rusije, naj bi, če bi imeli priložnost, ameriški Slovenci povedali;*
- *da je za bodoči razvoj slovenskega ljudstva v znamenju svobode in demokracije absolutno potrebno, da so politično združeni v eni celoti ...«.*

Omeniti je treba, da ameriški Slovenci takrat še niso imeli jasnega programa o bodoči usodi te združene Slovenije. V glavnem niso želeli obnovitve »stare Jugoslavije«, temveč so razmišljali o možnosti, da naj se *»združena Slovenija v bodoče združi v večjo federacijo, bodisi v balkansko bodisi v srednjeevropsko ...«.*

Na koncu sestanka je Etbin Kristan predložil resolucijo, ki so jo sprejeli vsi udeleženci sestanka. V njej so zapisali:

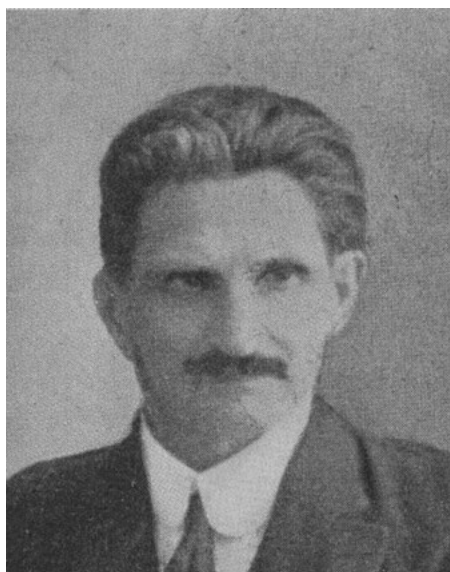
- »Zastopniki sedmih slovenskih centraliziranih podpornih in političnih organizacij v Ameriki, zbrani na sestanku v prostorih SNPJ v Chicagu, Ill. Dne 15. novembra, so sklenili:*
- 1. da je z ozirom na svetovni položaj in katastrofalne udarce, ki so zadele slovenski narod, potrebna politična akcija ameriških Slovencev, ki so poklicani, da govore za Slovence v stari domovini, dokler zadnjim ne padejo okovi z njihovih rok*
  - 2. da se v ta namen skliče slovenski narodni kongres, ki naj položi podlago za uspešno akcijo s ciljem, da se doseže zedinjenje vseh evropskih Slovencev v demokratični politični obliki v okviru pre-*

- novljene, demokratizirane, jugoslovanske, balkanske in naposled evropske federacije;*
3. *izvoljen je bil odbor,<sup>40</sup> ki naj pripravi vse potrebno za Slovenski narodni kongres in izvršuje nujno predhodno delo do kongresa».*

V zvezi s problematiko kongresa in z nekaterimi novicami o dogajanjih v stari domovini je Louis Adamič 4. januarja 1942 sklical v Clevelandu sestanek predstavnikov ameriških Slovencev, na katerega je povabil patra Bernarda Ambrožiča, Vincenta Cainkarja, Lea Jurjevca, Etbina Kristana, Marie Prisland, Janka Roglja, patra Kazimirja Zakrajška in Josepha Zalarja, sestanka pa so se udeležili še minister jugoslovanske vlade v izgnanstvu Franc Snoj, predstavnik te vlade dr. Boris Furlan in Frank Lausche, župan mesta Cleveland.<sup>41</sup> Na sestanku so se pogovorili o nadaljevanju politične akcije med ameriški Slovenci, s posebnim ozirom na smernice State Departmenta o »svobodnih gibanjih« ameriških državljanov, pripadnikov posameznih izseljenskih skupnosti, in o njihovem zanimanju za dogajanja v stari domovini.<sup>42</sup> Poleg tega so spregovorili še o italijanskih težnjah po priključitvi Dalmacije k Italiji ter o akcijah Otta Habsburškega za ustanovitev podonavske federacije.<sup>43</sup>



*Kazimir Zakrajšek.*



*Etbin Kristan.*

<sup>40</sup> Odbor so sestavljali Leo Jurjovec, Janko Rogelj, Marie Prisland, John Vidic, Ivan Molek, Josip Zalar, Frank Zaitz in Etbin Kristan.

<sup>41</sup> Chicago Historical Society, fond Molek Papers. Pismo Louisa Adamiča Bernardu Ambrožiču, Vincentu Cainkarju, Vatroslavu Grillu, Leu Jurjevcu, Etbinu Kristanu, Ivanu Moleku, Marie Prisland, Janku Roglju, Kazimirju Zakrajšku in Josipu Zalarju z dne 28. decembra 1941.

<sup>42</sup> Arhiv Jugoslavije, fond: Zasebni arhiv Save Kosanovića, SK 33/15, Pismo Moleka Ambrožiču, 11. maja 1941.

<sup>43</sup> Arhiv Jugoslavije, fond: Zasebni arhiv Save Kosanovića, SK 33/15, nepodpisano pismo Marie Prislandovi, 30. januarja 1942; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 179–180.



Potreba za politično akcijo ameriških Slovencev se je pokazala zlasti potem, ko je profesor geografije na Kolumbijski univerzi v New Yorku George T. Renner v reviji *Colliers* objavil zemljevid Evrope, po katerem je celotno slovensko narodno ozemlje pripadlo Italiji in Avstriji. Italiji naj bi pripadli tudi Dalmacija, Istra in Črna gora.<sup>44</sup> Glede na slabe izkušnje, ki so jih imeli ameriški Slovenci še iz obdobja po prvi svetovni vojni, je Vincent Cainkar 7. junija 1942 v Clevelandu sklical sestanek JPO-SS, na katerega je poleg predstavnikov slovenskih narodnih podpornih jedrot in političnih organizacij povabil še urednike večine ameriških slovenskih časopisov, pisatelja Luisa Adamiča, zastopnika clevelandskega župana Lauscheta Johna Lokarja, nekatere ministre jugoslovanske begunske vlade in nekaj drugih uglednih posameznikov. Cainkar je navzoče povabil, da se pogovorijo o politični akciji, ki naj bi ameriški in svetovni javnosti pojasnila zahteve po združenih Sloveniji, istočasno pa poskušala ovreči Rennerjeva pa tudi druga podobna stališča. Na tej seji je bil izvoljen tudi odbor za politično akcijo, ki so ga sestavljali James Debevec, Joško Penko, Anton Šabec, James W. Mally, Josie Zakrajsek, Etbin Kristan, F. M. Surtz, Vatroslav Grill in Ivan Molek.<sup>45</sup>

Ko je konec junija 1942 je glasilo KP ZDA *Daily Worker* objavilo članek, v katerem je Mihailovičeve četnike obsodil sodelovanja z nacisti,<sup>46</sup> je prišlo med ameriški Slovenci do prvih resnejših trenj. Vzrok za to je bila udeležba nekaterih ameriških Slovencev na sprejemu pri jugoslovanskem kralju Petru, ki je konec julija 1942 obiskal ZDA. Ameriški Slovenci, ki so se udeležili sprejema, so nastopali v imenu Ameriške slovenske narodne zveze, ki jo je ustanovil Joseph W. Mally na podlagi ožjega odbora politične akcije (v njem so bili tudi clevelandski člani odbora za politično akcijo Mally, Grill, Zakrajšek idr.). Zaradi teh trenj so na seji JPO-SS 12. septembra 1942 v Chicagu razpustili odbor za politično akcijo in podprli predlog Slovenske ženske zveze o sklicu slovenskega ameriškega narodnega kongresa. Sklenili so, da naj bi imeli pravico do udeležbe na kongresu vsi glavni odborniki vseh osrednjih slovenskih organizacij, vse krajevne slovenske organizacije in druge ustanove pa bi lahko poslale po enega delegata. Pravico do udeležbe bi imeli tudi uredniki vseh slovenskih časopisov, ki so izhajali v ZDA. Na sestanku pripravljalnega odbora 20. oktobra 1942 pa so še sklenili, da bodo imeli na kongresu tri glavne referate, in sicer »Vojna in Ameriški Slovenci«, »Položaj Slovencev v Jugoslaviji zamejnih držav« in »Politična akcija ameriških Slovencev«. Za predsednika referatnega odbora za prvi referat so predlagali Adamiča, za drugi referat Etbina Kristana za tretji referat pa Vincenta Cainkarja.<sup>47</sup>

Slovensko ameriški narodni kongres se je sestal 5. decembra 1942 v Slovenskem narodnem domu v Clevelandu. Udeležilo se ga je 528 delegatov vseh slovenskih narodnospodpornih, kulturnih in političnih organizacij oziroma predstavniki vseh struj v slovenskem ameriškem narodnem in političnem gibanju: socialisti in liberalci

<sup>44</sup> George T. Renner, »Maps for A New World«, *Collier's*, letnik 109, št. 23 (New York, 6. junij 1942), str. 14–16, 28.

<sup>45</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 189.

<sup>46</sup> Prav tam, str. 194.

<sup>47</sup> Prav tam, str. 190–197.

ter duhovniki in voditelji klerikalcev. Prisotni so bili tudi nekateri predstavniki jugoslovanske vlade v izgnanstvu (Franc Snoj, Boris Furlan, Miha Krek in Konstantin Fotič) ter Frank Lausche kot predstavnik ameriške vlade. Na kongresu je tretji referatni odbor, kateremu je predsedoval Cainkar, predložil resolucijo o ustanovitvi Slovenskega ameriškega narodnega sveta (SANS), ki naj bi v bodoče usklajeval in vodil politično akcijo ameriških Slovencev. Za predsednika SANS je bil izvoljen Etbin Kristan, za častnega predsednika pa Louis Adamič.<sup>48</sup> Slednji je po svojih zvezah v Washingtonu D.C. organiziral 15. januarja 1943 sprejem predstavnikov SANS pri direktorju Urada za strateške službe DeWitt Poolu in državnem podsekretarju Sumnerju Wellsu,<sup>49</sup> katerega se je udeležil tudi Cainkar. Delegacija je Wellsu izročila posebno spomenico, v kateri je bilo opisano, kdo so Slovenci, njihov zemljepisni položaj, poudarjeno pa je bilo tudi dejstvo, da so bili po prvi svetovni vojni razdeljeni med štiri države. Spomenica je opozarjala tudi na usodo slovenskega naroda po okupaciji Jugoslavije, še zlasti na fašistično nasilje in na upor Slovencev proti silam osi. In ravno ta upor naj bi dajal slovenskemu narodu »... pravico do boljše prihodnosti, ki je mogoča samo v eni politični organizaciji s široko avtonomijo v svobodni federativni in demokratični Jugoslaviji, v svobodnem federativnem Balkanu, svobodni in federativni Evropi«. <sup>50</sup>



Luis Adamič.



Mirko Kuhelj.

Omeniti je treba še, da je pred srečanjem prišlo do spora med patrom Kazimirjem Zakrajškom in drugimi člani delegacije, potem ko je Zakrajšek predlagal, naj

<sup>48</sup> Prav tam, str. 214–218.

<sup>49</sup> Arhiv Jugoslavije, osebni arhiv Save Kosanoviča 83/15, Pismo Kosanoviča La Guardii, 3. septembra 1942.

<sup>50</sup> Arhiv Slovenije, fond SANS, škatla 3, Memorandum Submitted to the Department of State, Friday, January 15, 1943, by the Delegation of the Slovenian American National Council, Representing Americans of Slovene Extraction; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 214–217.

Wellsa obvesti, da »slovenske vasi oziroma del teh vasi sedaj stražijo mladi slovenski fantje« oziroma privrženci Slovenske zaveze, organizacije predvojnih političnih strank, »ki branijo slovenske vasi pred zlimi komunisti«. Wellsu pa naj bi zamolčali, da so »tem mladim moškim ... dali orožje Italijanik«. Ob tem sporu je v Cainkarju dozorelo prepričanje, da je Zakrajšek italofil in avstrofil.<sup>51</sup> O tem je Cainkar 6. februarja 1943 pisal tudi Adamiču in med drugim navedel, da naj bi bili po njegovem mnenju spori med Zakrajškom in Snojem le navidezni, v resnici pa naj bi med seboj sodelovala za cilje (obnovitev monarhije), ki so v nasprotju s cilji ameriških Slovencev, in zato ne bi imel nič proti Zakrajškovemu odstopu z mesta sekretarja SANS.<sup>52</sup>

Zakrajšek je po teh dogodkih na drugi seji SANS, 27. februarja 1943, odstopil<sup>53</sup> tajniške posle pri SANSU pa je prevzel dotedanji pomožni tajnik Mirko Kuhelj. Ker je bil Kuhelj kot blagajnik SNPJ tam redno zaposlen, je moral za opravljanje zadolžitev v okviru SANS dobiti dovoljenje jednote.

Adamič in Kristan sta se kot voditelja slovenskih Američanov kmalu začela povezovati tudi s pripadniki drugih jugoslovanskih izseljenskih skupnosti. Tako je Adamič 18. maja 1943 sklical v New Yorku sestanek predstavnikov ameriških Slovencev, Srbov in Hrvatov, kjer naj bi razpravljali o ustanovitvi skupne organizacije. Ta naj bi si prizadevala za pomoč stari domovini, hkrati pa naj bi prispevala k umiritvi sporov med ameriškiimi Hrvati in ameriškiimi Srbi, ki so do septembra 1942 imeli že takšen obseg, da je morala posredovati ameriška vlada.<sup>54</sup> 18. junija 1943 so se Etbin Kristan, Mirko Kuhelj, Janko Rogelj in Cainkar sestali s po štirimi predstavniki Hrvaškega ameriškega narodnega kongresa in Srbskega ameriškega vidovdanskega kongresa ter sklenili, da bo novi odbor oziroma Združeni odbor južnoslovanskih Američanov (ZOJSA) postal koordinacijsko telo vseh jugoslovanskih organizacij.<sup>55</sup> Namen odbora je bil pomagati domovini med drugo svetovno vojno in prepričati ameriško politiko ter ameriško javnost, da bi se v bodoče na dogodke na Balkanu odzivali enako kot na dogodke v Ohio, Kaliforniji ali Michiganu. Člani ZOJSA so zagovarjali vključitev v bodočo južnoslovansko državo vseh s Slovenci in Hrvati poseljenih območij, ki so bila do začetka druge svetovne vojne pod italijansko, avstrijsko ali madžarsko oblastjo. Zavzemali so ser tudi za moralno podporo ter materialno pomoč narodno-osvobodilnim gibanjem v južnoslovanskih deželah. V zvezi s tem so delovali zoper mit o borbi četnikov pod vodstvom Draže Mihailovića proti okupatorjem v Jugoslaviji in Združenim narodom ter ameriški vladi predlagali, naj stopijo v stik z Avnojem.

<sup>51</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 218.

<sup>52</sup> Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica, rokopisna zbirka, fond Adamič, Pismo Vincenta Cainkarja Adamiču z dne 6. februarja 1943; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 220

<sup>53</sup> Arhiv Republike Slovenije, fond Slovenske izseljenske matice, Pismo patra Kazimirja Zakrajška Slovenian American National Council, 27. februarja 1943 – objavljeno v Darko Friš: *Korespondenca Kazimirja Zakrajška, O.F.M. (1928–1958)* (=Viri, 8). (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1985), str. 180–183.

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Mirko Markovič: *O razvoju narodnog pokreta kod Amerikanaca in Kanađana jugoslavenskog porijekla Jugoslovanski narodni pokret u SAD i Kanadi 1939–1945* (=Izdanje Nardem Yugoslav Published). (Toronto, 1983), str. 45.

<sup>55</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 232–233.

Podpora partizanskemu gibanju v domovini, za katerega sta se zavzemala ZOJSA ter SANS, je začela načenjati enotnost med slovenskimi socialisti in katoličani (levo in desno usmerjenimi) pa tudi znotraj posameznih izseljenskih organizacij. Do nesoglasij je prišlo tudi znotraj SNPJ, in sicer med voditelji jednote in urednikom *Prosvete* Ivanom Molkom, ki je bil zagret socialist, obenem pa odločen nasprotnik komunizma. Zato je menil, da ameriška organizacija, kakršna je SNPJ, ne bi smela podpirati osvobodilnega gibanja v domovini, v kateri so imeli vodilno vlogo komunisti. Ker je Molek vztrajal na svojem stališču, je na pritisk vodstva SNPJ marca 1944 odstopil kot urednik *Prosvete* in drugih publikacij SNPJ.<sup>56</sup>

Več ko je bilo poročil o dogodkih v stari domovini, težje je bilo ohranjati enotnost v gibanju ameriških Slovencev. Do novih nesoglasij je prišlo na seji izvršnega odbora SANS, 12. aprila 1944, ko je Joseph Zalar, eden voditeljev katoliško usmerjenih ameriških Slovencev, SANS-u očital pristranskost, ker podpira le partizansko gibanje. V burni razpravi je kakršni koli podpori narodnoosvobodilni borbi ostro nasprotoval tudi pater Ambrožič. Nastopil je z izjavama Slovenske zaveze in Socialistične stranke ter nekaterimi dokumenti nasprotnikov Osvobodilne fronte, ki jih je dobil s posredovanjem jugoslovanske vlade v izgnanstvu v Londonu. V burno razpravo se je vključil tudi Cainkar, ki je med drugim dejal:

*»Nas vseh namen je narodu doma pomagati, kolikor je največ mogoče. Tako hudo mi je, če se sedaj snuje SANS razbiti. Glavno je dognati, če SANS vrši tisto, kar mu je naročil narodni kongres, Jaz sem delal v tem smislu in bom tako tudi nadaljeval. Vsi smo za novo Jugoslavijo. Toda kakšna naj bo nova Jugoslavija? Fašistična? Ali diktatorska? Ne! Dali smo moralno podporo Ribarjevi novi vladi, katera stremi s svojim programom za istimi cilji, kot smo si jih zamislili mi v Ameriki. Mi smo stoodstotno za pošteno stvar . . . SANS se je postavil na stran Osvobodilne fronte. In to radi njenega političnega programa, ki je sličen našemu. Če se nahaja v Sloveniji še kaka druga slična organizacija, nam ni ničesar znanega o njej, niti ne o njegovem programu. Če je res, kar trdi pater Ambrožič, da ima Osvobodilna fronta tako malo manjšino naroda na svoji strani, kako more kontrolirati vso deželo? Poročilo predsednika o SANS-ovemu delu na seji širšega odbora je bilo sprejeto z velikim navdušenjem in zadovoljstvom. Toda sedaj se hoče prikazati, da je delo nepravdo . . . Pater Ambrožič trdi, da je SANS s svojim delom v konfliktu z željami večine našega naroda. Ne razumem, kako morejo ljudje nasprotovati programu v stari domovini, ki je sličen našemu in katerega smatramo za idealnega on demokratičnega?*

<sup>56</sup> Prav tam, str. 243–249.

*Narod doma je veren, a ne komunističen. Če hoče spremembe, tedaj je nekaj narobe s sistemom, pod katerim se je nahajal in proti kateremu se bori».*<sup>57</sup>

Po burnih razpravah sta kot zastopnika SANS v ZOJSA odstopila Zalar in Mary Prisland, kmalu za tem pa sta odstopila tudi kot člana SANS. Kljub ideološki diferenciaciji v SANS, je njegovo delovanje v prid NOB v Jugoslaviji podprla večina ameriških Slovencev. Med njimi sta bila tudi župnik Jurij Trunk in predsednik KSKJ John Germ.<sup>58</sup>

Po teh dogodkih je bila večina aktivnosti preusmerjena k reševanju tržaškega in koroškega vprašanja. Poleg politične akcije so ameriški Slovenci med drugo svetovno vojno precejšen del aktivnosti posvetili tudi zbiranju sredstev za pomoč stari domovini. To pomoč so zbirali v okviru Pomožne akcije slovenskih župnij, Jugoslovanskega pomožnega odbora–slovenske sekcije in SANS v okviru War Relief Fund of the Americans of South Slavic Descent (Vojni pomožni sklad Američanov jugoslovanskega porekla). Pri tem je zanimivo zlasti dejstvo, da sta SANS in JPO-SS zbirala sredstva ločeno, saj so se nekateri odborniki JPO-SS bali, da zbrani denar ne bi bil porabljen v Sloveniji. Čeprav ta razdvojenost ni ravno vzpodbudno vplivala na intenzivnost zbiranja, so slovenski Američani zbrali kar precej materialne pomoči za staro domovino. Z denarjem, ki so ga zbrali v SANS, so med drugim v Ljubljani zgradili pediatrično kliniko ter nekatere druge objekte, z denarjem, ki ga je zbral JPO-SS, pa so nabavili medicinske aparate za pediatrično kliniko.<sup>59</sup> K zbranemu denarju je več tisoč dolarjev prispevala tudi SNPJ.

## **Čas po drugi svetovni vojni**

Obdobju po drugi svetovni vojni med slovenskimi izseljenci v ZDA so zaznamovala zlasti prizadevanja za »pravično« rešitev tržaškega in koroškega vprašanja. Ameriškim Slovincem je z njihovimi aktivnostmi uspelo pritegniti pozornost zakonodajnih teles posameznih ameriških zveznih držav in ameriškega kongresa. To velja še zlasti za tako imenovano tržaško vprašanje, za katero se je začelo zanimati tudi precej članov Kongresa, zlasti znancev in prijateljev Adamiča ter Balokoviča. Tako je na primer senat zvezne države Washington sprejel resolucijo z zahtevo za takšno rešitev Tržaškega vprašanja, ki bi bila ugodna za Slovence, resolucijo o Tržaškem vprašanju pa je v ameriškem senatu v okviru splošne razprave o jugoslovanskem problemu prebral tudi ameriški zvezni senator Warren R. Magnusen.

<sup>57</sup> Prav tam, str. 260.

<sup>58</sup> Prav tam, str. 251.

<sup>59</sup> Marij Avčin, »Pomoč ameriških Slovencev novi otroški kliniki v Ljubljani«. V: *Slovenski izseljenski koledar 1956*. (Ljubljana: Slovenska izseljenska matica 1955), str. 129–135; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, str. 268–273.

Ko so se v letih po drugih svetovni vojni odnosi med ZDA in Jugoslavijo zaostri, je Cainkar na zborovanju SANS-a izjavil:

*»Vidite, kako se je vse spremenilo od tistih dni, ko so nas vabili, naj govorimo našim ljudem, da smo z njimi v njihovi borbi proti naci-fašizmu. Pa se bo gotovo vse še preobrnilo ob svojem času – Baš zdaj ima svoj dan reakcija. Glavno je, da ostanemo trdni in se ne pustimo begati in plašiti.«<sup>60</sup>*

Iz teh besed je razvidno, da je Cainkar vse do svoje smrti septembra 1948 nosil v sebi globoko ljubezen do naroda, iz katerega je izhajal. Ni pa mu bilo vseeno niti ob zaostritvi odnosov med ZDA in Jugoslavijo.

Omeniti je treba še, da je po začetku hladne vojne prišlo v ZDA do preganjanja komunistov. Pri tem je zanimivo, da so v teh pregonih sodelovali tudi nekateri slovenski izseljenci. Najbolj znan je bil posebni agent FBI Matt (Matija, Matty) Cvetič, ki je bil tudi član SNPJ in je v svojih pričanjih pred kongresno komisijo in senatnimi komisijami, ki so preiskovale subverzivne, protiameriške, komunistične dejavnosti, ovadil več sto »komunistov«. Med ovadenimi so bili tudi nekateri vodilni člani SNPJ, saj je SNPJ zaradi podpore Titovi Jugoslaviji in sodelovanja v Ameriškem slovanskem kongresu prišla na seznam »subverzivnih« organizacij.<sup>61</sup>

## **Zaključek**

Iz navedenega je razvidno, da so slovenski izseljenci, zlasti tisti iz prve generacije, kateri je pripadal tudi Cainkar, z zanimanjem spremljali dogajanja v stari domovini. To zanimanje je naraslo zlasti v obdobju političnih kriz, kot je bila prva svetovna vojna, za primorske Slovence pa tudi dogajanja okrog Londonskega sporazuma, razmejitve po prvi svetovni vojni ter nastop fašizma v Italiji. Precejšnje pozornosti slovenskih izseljencev v ZDA je bila stara domovina deležna med drugo svetovno vojno in tržaško krizo, po njej pa tudi na križpotju 90. let 20. stoletja ob procesih demokratizacije slovenske družbe, osamosvajanja Slovenije in njenem mednarodnem priznanju.

O vseh teh dogodkih je slovensko časopisje v ZDA pozorno poročalo, ameriški Slovenci pa so se nanje odzivali na različne načine. Pri različnih akcijah v podporo stari domovini so najpomembnejšo vlogo igrali voditelji organizacij slovenskih izseljencev, med katerimi je bil tudi dolgoletni predsednik SNPJ Vincent Cainkar. Te akcije niso bile pomembne le za pomoč slovenskih izseljencev stari domovini, ampak

<sup>60</sup> Prim.: »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju«, *Glas naroda*, letnik 56, št. 193 (New York, 5. oktobra 1948), str. 3.

<sup>61</sup> Več o tem glej v Andrej Kobal: *Slovenec v službi FBI in druge zgodbe ameriških Slovencev*. (Gorica: Goriška Mohorjeva družba, 1981); Daniel J. Leab: *I was a Communist for the FBI – The Unhappy Times and Life of Matt Cvetič*. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2000); Mojca Moškon Mešl: *Politično delovanje Andreja Kobala v ZDA – magistrsko delo*. (Ljubljana: Filozofska fakulteta Univerze v Ljubljani, 2005), str. 227–247.

so vplivale tudi na trdnejšo povezanost slovenske izseljenske skupnosti v ZDA in na ohranjanje slovenske identitete med njenimi pripadniki.<sup>62</sup>

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*James Cainkar, vnuk Vincenta Cainkarja (levo)  
in Joseph Evanish, sedanji predsednik SNPJ (desno).*





Ormož Historical Society

## Proceedings

# VINCENT CAINKAR VINCENC CAJNKO

(1879 - 1948)

**Life and Work of Slovene American Politician,  
Fraternalist, Men of Culture and  
President of SNPJ for Many Years**

## **Vincent Cainkar (Vincenc Cajnko), 1879–1948**

Life and Work of Slovene American Politician, Fraternalist, Men of Culture and President of SNPJ for Many Years

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## ***Introduction***

Slovenes have emigrated abroad during different historical periods, the most intensively from the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century onward. According to some estimates, there are today around a half million people of Slovene ancestry living outside Slovene ethnic territory. So we can trace the destinies of many of the people who decided to leave the homeland for economic, social, religious, or political reasons. Immigration of Slovenes to the United States was especially intensive at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Never before and never after that have so many people left the Slovene ethnic territory.

In the new homeland Slovenes were organized and active in fraternal organizations and Slovene Catholic parishes, and they gathered in Slovene national homes. In the framework of these organizations, many of which have survived until today, they took care of maintenance and development of Slovene culture and language, until we sometimes feel today that the center of Slovene life has been moved from Slovenia to Slovenes who live in neighboring countries and elsewhere in the world. It could be asserted that while the differences in their history in these places outside Slovenia are vanishing, their pride is increasing. At home, it is the opposite—the differences are on the rise, while the pride is vanishing.

I could ask Slovenes living abroad to return to Slovenia and bring with them some of the pride and the capacity to talk to each other with optimism and looking forward. This would be the only way to achieve the society that we wish to have: a society in which it will not be important anymore what someone's last name is, who his grandfather was, and to which group he belongs. What will be important will only be what he did, what he does, and what he has already accomplished.

Prof. dr. *Boštjan Žekš*,  
*Member of the Slovene Academy of Sciences,*  
*Minister, Chair of the Office for Slovenians Abroad*



Anton Luskovič<sup>1</sup>

**WHAT WAS THE MAN, KNOWN IN HIS SECOND HOMELAND,  
THE USA, AS VINCENT CAINKAR?**

*Introductionary Speech at International Historical Symposium  
in Kog, 28 July 2011*

Honorable locals, our dear guests, we have gathered here at Kog, an idyllic little place on the last slopes of Slovenske gorice, a place that has given name to the smallest local community in the municipality of Ormož. There are only about 900 people living today in six villages that form a wreath on the vineyard slopes and meadowy valleys, around the highest hill with the St. Bolfenk church and the primary school, the most dominant buildings in the village.

The villages in local community Kog have interesting names: Kog, Gomila by Kog, Lačaves, Jastrebcji, Vodrancji and Vitan. Interesting names and interesting world.



*Kog.*

Today is a very special day for Kog.

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<sup>1</sup> Anton Luskovič, lawyer and president of Ormož Historical Society.

We are going to revive the memory of one of our sons, our countryman Vincent Cankar or Vincenc Cajnko, remembered only by a few people of Kog.

The birth of Vincenc Cajnko was recorded on 22 November 1879 in the birth certificate book of the St. Bolfenk parish in Kog. He was born into a poor family in Jastrebcı, in a house which, at that time, had number 28.



*Birthplace.*

Father Ivan (Johan) Cajnko was a vineyard owner, by mountain law a person who enjoys vineyards. He was born on 18 October 1842, and he was a son of Jožef and Marija Cajnko. He married Marija Zabavnik, a daughter of farmer Jakob Zabavnik from Vodranci 23, in February 1868. Their life was full of hardship and the everyday fight for survival. Vincenc was the seventh of ten children:<sup>2</sup>

1. Janez (Johan), born 30 December 1867;
2. Ana, born 10 July 1870;
3. Franc, born 19 September 1872 (died 14 October 1872);
4. Matija, born 16 February 1874;
5. Marija, born 11 November 1875;
6. Franc, born 6 September 1878 (died 14 December 1878);
7. **Vincenc, born 22 November 1879;**
8. Bolfenk (Wolfgang), born 22 October 1881 (died 9 August 1884);
9. Ivana, born 23 August 1884;
10. Franc, born 1 December 1886

<sup>2</sup> Status animarum of St. Bolfenk Parish, Kog, Diocese archives Maribor.

Helena Rajh (nee Lukman), a farmer from Vodranci, was Vincenc's godmother. Johan Trampuž, a priest in Kog at that time, performed the baptism.

With this I conclude the discussion on family relationships connected with the man about whom we are going to talk today.

\* \* \* \* \*

It was 1879, the year when Vincent Cainkar was born. We could say that even the weather that year forecasted the unusual destiny of young Vincenc. It was unusually warm right after the New Year of 1879. It started snowing in February, and one afternoon there was a huge thunderstorm with lightning and large-size hail. In the middle of October, in the afternoon, there was a horrible thunderstorm with lightening, strong wind and rain coming from all directions. It started snowing at night and it continued throughout the next day. A thick blanket of snow covered the vineyards and caused a lot of damage right before the grape picking; a lot of trees were broken as well.



*Elementary school.*

The chronicle writer claims that the 1879/1880 winter was so rough that some people and animals froze to death. There were five feet of thick ice covering the

Drava River; a lot of ice blocks damaged some of the mills.<sup>3</sup> The temperatures were below zero, around minus 15 to minus 18 degrees centigrade, which caused a lot of damage in vineyards and in orchards. Even in the middle of March the ground was still frozen.

The primary school next to St. Bolfenk in Kog had three grades when Vincenc Cajnko started going to school there. There were only a headmaster, a teacher and a Sunday school teacher at the school. There were 180 students from Vodranci, Jastrebcji, Kog with Gomila and Vitan with Lačaves enrolled in the school. The school was in the municipality Kog on the top of a beautiful hill decorated with vineyards.

There were 206 children along with Vincenc who went to confirmation classes at St Bolfenk church.

After primary school, Vincenc helped his parents with difficult and low paying work in vineyards. He served in the Army with dragoons, i.e. light cavalry. He was a handsome boy and soldier.

Slovene writer, journalist and translator Mirko Kuhelj from Kostanjevica na Krki, who later also immigrated to the United States and served as treasurer in SNPJ home office and as secretary general of Slovene American national Council during the World War II, wrote after Cainkar's death in newspaper Glas Naroda, "*that as a child he admired soldier Cajnko, who wore nice red pants, shiny boots, and a pair of stars on the collar of his army shirt.*"<sup>4</sup>

After serving in the Army, Vincenc went back home. Because of the difficult vineyard worker's life, constant hardship and no good prospects, young Cajnko left his homeland in 1904 to find better possibilities in the USA.

Since the current president of SNPJ, Mr. Joseph Evanish, is going to speak about our countryman's »American years,« I will only mention that our Vinc Cajnko became Vincent Cainkar in the USA. He started working in factories in Pennsylvania; afterwards he moved his family to a farm in Missouri.

Cainkar's restless spirit led him away from farm work to St. Louis, where he helped establish Lodge 197 SNPJ in 1907.<sup>5</sup> Vincent Cainkar became president at the 7th SNPJ convention in 1918, and he presided for almost thirty years until 1948.

He died at the beginning of the fourth meeting of the Slav-American Congress in Chicago. As the president of SNPJ, Vincent was a member of the board of directors, which allowed him to closely cooperate with this Congress.

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<sup>3</sup> Fran Kovačič: *Trg Središče: krajepis in zgodovinopis*. (Maribor: Zgodovinsko društvo za Slovensko Štajersko, 1910), p. 568.

<sup>4</sup> »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju,« *Glas naroda*, Vol. 56, No. 193 (New York, 5 October 1948), p. 3.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

Vincent Cainkar was a socialist, and he was one of the first to decide to somehow help Slovenes in the old homeland when World War II broke out. *"He supported every progressive idea, he believed in the ideal of work and the final victory of justice and freedom,"* as was written in his obituary notice in Prosveta on 29 September 1948.<sup>6</sup>

The people of Kog should be proud of this modest and, at the same time, important countryman. I hope that this day will ensure that the memory of Vincent Cainkar, our Vinc Cajnko, will continue living among our people. The knowledge of how important people have grown roots on this clayey Prlekija ground is the best medicine for curing the complex of smallness and being pushed to the edge.

People like Vincent Cainkar put us, the people on the edge, into the middle of the world.

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<sup>6</sup> »SNPJ Mourns Passing of Supreme President Cainkar,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 40, No. 191 (Chicago, 29 September 1948), p. 3.





## **SLOVENES AND THE PROCESSES OF EMIGRATION<sup>2</sup>**

In professional circles as well as generally under the umbrella title »Slovene emigrants,« all those persons of Slovene descent are included who have ever moved away from the Slovene ethnic territory, irrespective of the causes of emigration, and numerous changes of state/national borders in different periods of history. We distinguish this group of people, i.e., Slovene emigrants from members of the Slovene indigenous minorities in neighboring countries (*zamejci*) in the Slovene language. Even in Slovenia, people in general sometimes mix up Slovene emigrants/immigrants with *zamejci*, i.e. indigenous Slovenes who have inhabited these territories in neighboring countries as minorities for centuries. Of course, it is necessary to bear in mind also a group of so-called »guest workers« (*zdomci* in Slovene), those who temporarily migrated mainly to European countries. Today, the majority of Slovene »guest workers« and immigrants have decided to adopt citizenship in the countries of immigration and thus established permanent settlement in these countries. After the disintegration of Yugoslavia this terminology applies also to those ethnic Slovenes who live in the countries of former Yugoslavia, a majority of whom can mainly be considered as the emigrants.

Today, the number of members of the Slovene Diaspora and Slovenes in neighboring countries—the *zamejci*—is estimated at half a million ethnic Slovenes who live outside the borders of the Republic of Slovenia. However, the Slovenian emigrant communities in various stages of history were represented in various state and political formations, as they lived in the same country as the majority of Slovenes did. In the period before the First World War or during the period of the Habsburg monarchy, there were large Slovene communities

in Graz, Vienna, and also in Bosnia. In the Yugoslav period of Slovene history, between 1918 and 1991, these groups included also the Slovenes in Belgrade, Bosnia, Zagreb and other towns in the former Yugoslavia.

Slovenes emigrated in all periods of their history, but their movement was particularly intense from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. The first period of the Slovene emigration was before the 1870s. During this period mainly adventurers, missionaries, and immediately after 1848 political émigrés emigrated. Although these immigrants did not create permanent Slovene ethnic settlements, nor had a greater im-

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<sup>2</sup> The author acknowledges the help in creation of this article by Dr. Zvone Žigon and Jernej Čelofiga and thank for it.

pact on the further course of the Slovene emigration, they still represent a precursor of a mass emigration of Slovenes.

The Slovene population emigrated most intensively from its ethnic territory from the end of the 1870s until the First World War. During this period more than 300,000 people emigrated from these areas, of whom around 60,000 moved to the Habsburg Empire area outside Slovene ethnic territory. Most of these moved to nearby industrial and mining areas in Upper Styria and Vienna, and some also to Bosnia and Herzegovina. Around 30,000 Slovenes emigrated to Westphalia and other mining areas of Germany, and all others to North and South America (of which around 20,000 went to the South and just over 150,000 to North America). After the First World War, the first wave consisted of a return of Slovene emigrants to the newly created country (the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes), but they were soon frustrated by the situation prevailing in that country and so decided to return to their countries of previous emigration.

The next period of emigration from the Slovene ethnic territory began after the First World War, when the Slovene ethnic territory was divided among four countries. During this period, the largest wave of emigration from the Slovene ethnic territory was from Primorska, which then belonged to Italy; but some people also emigrated from Austrian Carinthia, Raba country in Hungary and also from the Yugoslav Slovenia. They moved mainly to Argentina and Canada, from which some later moved to the United States. Still, there was also a mass exodus in some Western European countries. In the years between the world wars particularly, numerous Slovenes immigrated to the mining areas in Westphalia. Slovenes of Primorska and Carinthia mainly emigrated not for »bread with butter,« but for political reasons, due to the pressures of Italian fascism and the predecessors of Austrian German Nazis.

After the Second World War, the first group of political exiles emigrated from Slovenia. They went mainly to Canada, South America, and Australia; a tiny fraction of them made it to the United States. Waves of political migrants continued at the end of the 1940s and early 1950s, when the government of Yugoslavia allowed the relatives of those who had emigrated before to join their relatives. In the 1950s an exodus began of people who left their homeland in search of better earnings. Despite the fact that it was mainly illegal emigration, these migrants could not be labeled as political emigrants, as most of them were not exposed to political pressure from the then Yugoslav authorities before they left.

After the opening of the Yugoslav borders in the mid-1960s, Yugoslavia became the only socialist/communist country that allowed its citizens to legally migrate to another country. Thus, Yugoslav citizens could join their friends and relatives anywhere in the world, if this was in accordance with the migration policy of the prospective country of immigration. The open borders policy also created a new type of migrant who has retained citizenship in their ancestral country. A host country has treated those migrants as temporary workers or as guest-workers. The Slovene

terminology for them is expatriates (*zdomci*). The result of emigration of Slovenes to all Western European countries, particularly Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Norway, as well as Australia, was establishment of numerous centers of Slovene immigrants in those countries.

In the last three decades, the emigration from Slovenia is highly reduced and is limited mainly to temporary emigration for study, for reasons of employment in special occupations, or for personal reasons (marriage). Over the past ten years, especially since the economic crises of 2008, we can see the trend of slightly increased emigration to Australia and New Zealand, but we are still talking about the 200 to 300 persons who emigrate annually. Slovenian emigrants were organized in the new homelands in mainly three types of groupings: in fraternal organizations, Slovenian Catholic parishes, and Slovenian national homes.

Fraternal organizations acted as insurance companies for accident and health insurance, while with their profits they also supported publishing, cultural, political, sports, and recreational activities of their members. This form of organization has established itself especially in the United States and Canada, and partly in the South American countries, such as in Argentina. The first fraternal organizations were already organized by Slovenes 1890s in the United States, where they continued to be established up to the First World War. In Canada the Slovene immigrants established these organizations in the 1930s, while in South America, especially in Argentina, the Slovene immigrants established fraternal organizations even after the Second World War. In Australia and in Europe, such organizations were not established, since social, health, and pension protection is organized by the state in these countries, and so fraternal organizations are not needed.

Another form of organization of Slovene immigrants, ethnic parishes, were mostly established in the United States from the early 1890s to the end of the 1920s. After a large emigration wave swept across Europe, the Catholic Church was primarily interested in maintaining faith among immigrants, as some in the Catholic hierarchy believed that emigrants were in danger of losing their faith. Organization of Slovene parishes in the United States was similar in all Slovene settlements. Priests were either from the old country or people who had studied for the priesthood in American seminaries.

Slovene emigrants raised considerable sums of money to build church buildings and so those churches even today represent important monuments of U.S. Slovene culture. Parishes after the Second World War were established even by Slovene emigrants in Canada and Argentina. In contrast to these states, in Australia only church missions are allowed, as church law in Australia does not allow creation of ethnic parishes. A Slovene parish in Montreal was also organized as a mission in Canada.

The third form of organization of Slovenian immigrants has been national homes supported by fraternal organizations, as well as parishes or their organizations. In

national homes meetings of Slovene immigrants took place. Also meetings of individual lodges of fraternal organizations or cultural performances and political gatherings took place in those buildings. Slovene emigrants built in the United States over 100 such buildings. Some were built also in Canada, Argentina, and Australia. Slovene national homes in many places today represent the center of cultural, fraternal, and political activities of Slovene emigrant communities.

Among Slovene national homes, one worth mentioning in particular is the Borough of SNPJ, which became an independent municipality. In it there are different types of facilities, including the large hall where many important events take place. Within the complex are also extensive recreational facilities and modest accommodations for rest and recreation. Slovenian refugees from post-World War II in the 1960s built Slovenska pristava near Cleveland, which even today hosts many events of the Slovenian community in this area.

Quite a few of the Slovene national homes were also built by Slovene societies in Australia, where some contain slot machines. Also here are hosted and organized cultural and entertainment events.

Not negligible is the role played by important Slovene immigrant achievers who as individuals, with their work contributed greatly to the reputation of Slovene emigrant communities and Slovenia as their original homeland.

Most such cases are found among the Slovenes in the United States that have as members of city councils exercised their duties already in the first generation in the 1880s. Shortly thereafter, the first Slovene emigrants or their descendants established themselves in the legislative chambers in the western states. For example, Slovene emigrants could be found among members of the Legislature of Wyoming. Already in the 1930s there were four Slovene Americans among the 25 members in the Cleveland City Council, while in the 1940s, Frank Lausche, of Slovene descent, even occupied the position of mayor of Cleveland. Later he became the five-term governor of Ohio, then the two-term (until 1968) Senator in the U.S. Senate. After the Second World War John Blatnik from northern Minnesota was a member of the U.S. Congress from 1946 until 1974. He is well known among the Slovenes as a member of the U.S. military mission among Slovene partisans during World War II. In the 1980s there were three members of the U.S. Congress of Slovene descent, namely Dennis Eckart from Cleveland, Ray Kogovsek from southern Colorado and, James Oberstar of Northern Minnesota. At the end of the 1970s, the political ascent began for George Voinovich, who, like Frank Lausche, was elected mayor of Cleveland, then governor of Ohio and finally U.S. Senator from Ohio. He retired a few months ago. Today active politicians of Slovene descent the U.S. federal level include Senator Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota, Senator Tom Harkin of Iowa, and Congressman Paul Gosar from Arizona (who is a descendant of Slovene immigrants from Rock Springs in Wyoming).

In the Cleveland City Council there are still very visible descendants of Slovenes Joe Cimperman and Michael Polenšek.

A similar situation occurred in Australia, where Tom Lajovic succeeded to get elected to the Australian senate. Fewer Slovenes were active in the political life in the new homelands of Argentina and Canada.

Slovene immigrants and their descendants are also visible in the Catholic Church hierarchy. To illustrate, we have to mention the bishops of Marquette, Baraga and his successors Trobec and Vertin; Bishop of Lead, South Dakota; Stariha, Chancellor of the Diocese of Duluth; Joseph Buh, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Cleveland; and Edward Pevc and Cardinal Aloysius Ambrozic of Toronto.

Among the important Slovenian compatriots we have to mention also Vincent Cankar, to whose memory the symposium is dedicated.

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## ***POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS IN KOG AT THE END OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> AND IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURIES***

This article is about the economic, political, and everyday conditions in Kog during the life and work of Vincent Cainkar.

The village Jastrebcji, where Vincenc Cajnko or Vincent Cainkar was born, is one of the six villages in Kog region. During the Habsburg era which lasted until 1918, there were two names used for this village, the German Jastrowetz and the Slovene name Jastrebcji. During World War II, the German occupiers renamed Jastrebcji to Sparbersbach.

According to Peter Dajnko, the village most likely got its original name after the colony of vultures (vultures is *jastreb* in Slovene language) nesting in the deciduous forests, especially near the Šantovec Creek. The vultures were supposedly so big that they were able to carry away children.<sup>2</sup> According to other authors Jastrebcji was named for a former mayor or a land community functionary.<sup>3</sup>

Slovene linguist, publicist and ethnologist Karol Štrekelj assumes that Jastrebcji might have depended on some family whose name included the word Jastreb (Vultur, Geier), like the famous family in Ptuj in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.<sup>4</sup>

The village Jastrebcji is first mentioned as Sparbergspach in 1320. The Joseph II military land survey uses the name Jastrebczi in the second half of the eighteenth century. The description claims that there were no solid buildings in the village. The altitude of Jastrebcji is about 230 to 270 meters above sea level. It is a dispersed settlement in the most eastern part of Slovenske gorice, reaching the Šantovec Creek and the Croatian border. The parts of the settlement are: Ciganija (in Ciganija, ciganijski – adj., Ciganijci – people), Tumpovščak (in Tumpovščak, tumpovčaški – adj., Tumpovščani – people) in Pesovščak (in Pesovščak). The names testify to the sources. It is said that 'stupid' ('tumpasti') people lived in Tumpovščak. The old saying was that people with canine heads ('psoglavci') lived in Pesovščak.

The imperial governorship in Graz proclaimed new municipalities (communities) with a special decree on 20 September 1850. The new municipalities were

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<sup>1</sup> Anton Luskovič, lawyer and president of Ormož Historical Society.

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Pepika Luci from Jastrebcji.

<sup>3</sup> Borut Belec: *Ljutomersko–Ormoške gorice*. (Maribor: Založba Obzorja, 1968), p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Karol Štrekelj, »Razlaga nekaterih krajevnih imen po Slovenskem Štajerju«, *Časopis za zgodovino in narodopisje*, Vol. 3 (1906), p. 63.

formed in districts.<sup>5</sup> The area of Kog, which belonged to judicial district of Ormož, was organized in three municipalities:

- Municipality Vitan, with Vitan and Lačaves;
- Municipality Kog, with Kog and Gomila; and
- Municipality Jastrebcji, with Jastrebcji.<sup>6</sup>

The municipalities were mostly populated with farmers and they were almost the same size as bigger squares or city municipalities. The people living in these municipalities solved their own basic problems: school financing, regulating the streets, granting identification vinedresser's books, issuing poverty certificates, etc. The municipalities were supposedly independent, but there was little actual independence because of their poor economic conditions. The head of the municipality was a mayor, who was a member of the upper classes.

Mostly Slovenes lived in these municipalities; there were only a few German-speaking people. For this reason, the officials dealt and communicated with people in the Slovene language. The correspondence with higher agencies was a problem as they had to communicate in German language; therefore, the newspaper *Guard* (*Straža*) asked all Slovene municipalities to officiate only in the Slovene language and to refuse letters of any office if written in German.

A political administrative unit called »district board« represented the actual state authority.

In 1879, the municipality Jastrebcji had 225 people (129 men and 126 women), who lived in 58 houses, three of them almost in ruins. The houses were scattered in the valley; most of them were built of brick, some of them were wooden, and all of them were straw-covered. More than ninety percent of locals were farmers, including the winegrowers.

The birthrate in the period from 1870 to 1918 in Jastrebcji was a bit higher than today's, but the mortality among children was much higher. Half of all born children died before the age of one. The names in the birth book were written in Latin alphabet as a rule, which was sometimes by coincidence combined with German orthography (Theresa, Gertraud, Joseph, etc.) until the end of the nineteenth century. At the turn of the century all first names were written in Slovene form.

According to the social-economic status, people were divided into one half-landowner, five quarter-landowners, eight cottagers, and the rest were vinedressers' vine cultivators; cottages.

The economy was based on wine growing and scattered agriculture. The cows grazed in the common pasture or were fed grass mowed in the vineyards. The roads

<sup>5</sup> Miroslav Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20 stoletju – B.A. Thesis*. (Ljubljana: Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, 1986), pp. 64–66.

<sup>6</sup> Tonček Luskovič: *Kog: krajepis in zgodovinois*. (Velenje: Založba Pozoj, 2009), pp. 169–188.



were actually cart tracks; there were some wooden planks across Šantavec Creek towards Preseka and towards Hungary.

There was a stone pit of building stone operating in the municipality of Jastrebcí. The stone was sold to people from neighboring villages.

There were quite a few important people born in Jastrebcí:

- Jože Kerenčič (1915–1941), a World War II national hero, writer of stories, writer of sociological debates, ideological leader of the national liberation movement in Prekija and Slovenske gorice, killed as a hostage in Maribor;
- Alojz Šparavec (1819–1857), a cultural and political worker, who helped cultural worker and member of the movement to culturally unite South Slavic Peoples Stanko Vraz with collecting Slovene Styrian folk songs and (together with Slovene cultural worker Anton Globočnik) represented Slovene Illyrian interests in the Pan-Slavic congress in Prague in 1848;
- Božo Vičar (Matija)(1894–1972), an opera and concert singer. He died in Zagreb.
- Jožef Kolarič (1882–1942), a farmer and soldier. He was awarded, as the only one among the field officers, the silver Karadjordjević star adorned with swords and the French war cross with palm tree for bravery for the breakthrough at the Salonika front.

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What were the actual circumstances in these villages at the end of the nineteenth century?<sup>7</sup>

The year 1848, despite many disappointments, brought a real revolutionary change to a Slovene farmer. People living in the Slovene countryside, who were under the influence of the February revolution in Paris and the March revolution of 1848 in Austria, started breaking the chains of the feudal dependency on landowners.

Unfortunately, Slovene political representatives in Ljubljana were not able to match the new position and the demanding work, brought on by the new era. Their immaturity, dependence, and fear of revolutionary occurrences in the countryside led them under the influence of Austrian reactionary forces, which supported the threatened dynasty and multinational Austrian empire.

The Slovenes in Styria (Štajerska) also felt the real danger of Germanization. This is the reason for the beginning of the powerful Illyrian movement (Stanko Vraz), which searched for union with the Croatian people.

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

The national awakening in the Styria countryside was manifested in collecting signatures against the participation of Slovenes in the Frankfurt parliament and unfurling Slovene flags in cities and squares. The news reports from that time (1848) document the unfurling of the flags in Maribor, Ptuj, Ormož, and Ljutomer. Year 1848, »the spring of nations,« was slowly turning into »the summer of nations« in the multinational Austro-Hungarian monarchy. The second half of the nineteenth century brought a hard battle of the Slovene nation for its political, cultural, and social rights.

Even Kog, the place in the fringe, the place at the border, was taken over by the »spring breeze.« More and more people started complaining about the lack of rights and the injustice, done by the foreign landowners, especially in the winegrowing sphere, where the social class differences were extreme in the vineyard worker–vineyard owner relationship. This originates in the relationship between the workers and the owners of the means of production.

### ***Economic conditions***

Winegrowing became the most important agricultural activity in the nineteenth century, the main reason being the geographical characteristics of the Kog area. Increase in the class differences, traced to the end of World War I, has its roots in the nineteenth century. In the sense of social security, we have, on one hand, winegrowers who, despite crises and debts, were able to grow so much that they did not feel any hardship. On the other hand, more than half of the vineyard workers, living on the rented land, were able to produce only so much that they had food for a short period, even if the crop yield was good.

In order to understand the social-political development and extreme opposites of the winegrower/owner–vine worker land-originated relationship, two classes need to be distinguished, which are somehow more or less opposite.

The winegrowers' class was not united in an ethnic or social sense, or in the place where they lived. In the ethnic sense we distinguish among locals and »foreigners,« mostly German-speaking from German ethnic territory of the Habsburg Monarchy. According to the place where they lived, we distinguish among those living in the vineyard areas, the ones living in villages in Dravsko polje, and those living in cities and townships. In a social sense, we distinguish among landed proprietors–feudal lords (Ormož, Dornava), among church and public institutions, townspeople, inhabitants of market towns, and farmers.

Local and foreign land of winegrowers was almost unified in the second half of the nineteenth century, but the people of Kog municipality owned only one-fourth of the vineyards. Husbandries were mostly small and medium-sized. A class of cot-

tagers (vinedressers) with less than one hectare (2.47 acres) of land was very distinctive.

Husbandries had on average 2.6 hectares (6.44 acres) of land. Among non-local owners were mostly landowners from Središče with its vicinity and taxable land municipality bordering on Kog. These landowners owned 44.8 percent of non-local land. Landowners who were ethnic Germans from German ethnic territories owned 26.5 percent of non-local vineyards. Farmers owned a good half of non-local land, but a third of that land belonged to the lords of the manors and the rest was civic and church land.

At the end of the century phylloxera (plant lice) appeared, first in Primorska (Coastland) and then in the rest of Slovene ethnic territory; it destroyed entire vineyards. The only defense against the vine louse was planting resistant vines of American origin and grafting European species with American species.

The state tried to solve the problem with easy loans, but the winegrowing areas kept shrinking until 1940. Not only this, but also mass selling of vineyards forced the proprietary, demographic, and land structure to change in a relatively short time. There were fewer and fewer local owners; foreign big landowners took over the most quality lands.

The state took care of ensuring quality winegrowing with repressive provisions, by suing the winegrowers who planted and multiplied native vines. Individual winegrowers were able to keep only up to 500 vines of native vines; the rest had to be rooted out. These measures can be traced to 1935, when a winegrower was allowed to exchange two rooted native vines for one vine of noble species.

In order to somewhat protect a ruined farmer from a strong capitalism and for national interest, new rural savings and loans were established. There were two operating in Kog. These institutions used the Reiffeissen system. These rural savings and loans represented a real help to the insolvent countryside, but it did not prevent the decaying of smaller farms.

Jože Kerenčič wrote in his social study »Študij o naši vasi« [Study about our village] in *Ljubljanski zvon* in 1936:

*People are starting to complain about the time of their life, the happenings into which they are thrust. We find out how an eternal flame started burning in our villages, how our people use wood chips to light their houses, how they use saccharin to sweeten and lard to salt food.*

*It is the same as the story of the Middle Ages and early modern times, being under the counts until our soil felt enlightenment and the break of the feudal society in the middle of the previous century.*

*After capitalism grew exuberantly on the ruins of feudalism, our people started emigrating, running from their home country, which they definitely loved, to America, France, Westphalia, and other countries in search of happiness and bread, which the homeland was not able to offer to "freed farmers," as the land was mostly owned by big landowners and monasteries.*

*Here we talk about Slovene rural people, who represent the majority in its nation, about a great number of workers, who, in distant and recent past, gave fresh current to national collective, foreign countries, ran from land to industry; and about farmhands and servant girls, manservants, fiscal officers, executives, policemen and soldiers; and also about crowds tied to the land and conditions, ruling Slovene villages in these capitalist relationships.*

*There were about 100,000 Slovene farm people. For food, thousands do their daily work under harsh conditions as workers in the vineyards wages; release their passions in greed, hatred, and killings—all because of bread. Family tragedies, decay of friendships, spiritual splits, falls of any kind, and infinite suffering took place in the region.*

## **Political conditions**

Slovenes in Kog, as in the rest of Styria, during the Habsburg rule until World War I fought for the affirmation of their national awareness and national demands for equality. It is possible to observe national awareness and the political strength of Slovene people through the results of municipal, provincial, and parliamentary elections. We also have to take into consideration some characteristics of the election system and happenings in a broader area than the Kog region.

Styrian provincial elections were held at the end of 1902. Slovene electoral board in Ljutomer decided not to have a common candidate; this decision was left to the voters. The results were as follows: Ivan Kočevar got 70 votes and he beat the Slovene opposition candidate Anton Korošec, who got 44 votes. The German candidate got only eight votes.<sup>8</sup> Ljutomer district was one of the three centers in Styria, where the first rifts in the unity of Slovene political parties in the beginning of the twentieth century took place.

Young intellectuals, especially lawyers, joined by some progressive older members, assembled in the fall of 1906 in Narodni dom (National home) in Celje, where they decided to follow their own political path. They established a new political party, named Narodna stranka – National Party (NS). Their party program was compiled in a small booklet titled »Štajerski Slovenci, kaj hočemo?« [Slovenes of Styria, what

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<sup>8</sup> Vasilij Melik: *Volitve na Slovenskem 1861–1918*. (Ljubljana: Slovenska matica, 1965), p. 391.

do we want?].<sup>9</sup> They demanded national autonomy—meaning united Slovenia—with their own parliament in Ljubljana and use of the Slovene language in schools, offices, railways, etc. They were against clericalism, but not against religion. They wanted to win over the rural class, so they propagated ideas about cooperatives; in Ljutomer region especially for viticulture and fruit growing. They also wanted to win over Slovene workers, merchants, and crafters, so they also demanded the building of a railway line between Ljutomer and Ormož. They also searched for adherents among teachers and clerical staff of Slovene nationality. Among the signers of this booklet were also a landowner, an inhabitant of a market town and a mayor from Središče ob Dravi Josip Šinko, and a doctor Karel Chloupek.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. Anton Korošec was also organizing his followers. There was a founding general meeting of Slovenska kmečka zveza, Slovenian farmers' association (SKZ) in Maribor at the beginning of 1907. In order to avoid any consequences of a rift, provincial and parliamentary delegates assembled in Maribor in November 1906 to agree about the establishment of a national council, which included members of both political parties.<sup>11</sup>

This unity ended the next year, since the 1907 parliamentary elections brought double candidature. In judicial district Ljutomer the winner was Ivan Roškar, candidate of SKZ. In court circuit Ormož the winner was Dr. Miroslav Ploj, candidate of NS.

Viktor Kukovec from Ljutomer reached into these divided »interest spheres« after 1907, and he became an official candidate of Socialdemokratska stranka – Social Democratic Party (SDS) for judicial district Maribor.<sup>12</sup>

The first public assembly of SDS in Ljutomer was in April 1907 in pub Kukovec. The speakers were Kukovec and Etbin Kristan.<sup>13</sup> The next week, on 14 April, was a similar assembly of NS in Ljutomer, where one of the speakers was Kukovec, who advocated the thesis that Slovenes were not a nation of farmers, but a nation of poor people. He also discussed the issues concerned vineyard workers and cottagers.<sup>14</sup> SDS had potential adherents only in hesitating vineyard workers, since there was no working class in Ljutomer or Ormož, much less in the countryside.

Despite all efforts, the SDS party was not successful; therefore, rivals SKZ and NS kept their political influence in Jeruzalemske gorice. The fight between both parties was transferred to ordinary people, who expressed their political affiliation in many different ways and also tried to measure their political opponents.

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<sup>9</sup> Vekoslav Špindler: *Štajerski Slovenci, kaj hočemo?* (Celje: [s. n.], 1906).

<sup>10</sup> Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20 stoletju ...*, p. 69.

<sup>11</sup> Janko Orožen, »Politični razvoj v Celju in Celjski pokrajini od 1848–1918«, *Časopis za zgodovino in narodopisje*, Vol. 47 (1971), No. 2, p. 250.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Etbin Kristan (1867–1953) later emigrated to the U.S. and was in the leadership of Yugoslav Republican Alliance during World War I and president of Slovene American National Council during World War II.

<sup>14</sup> Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20 stoletju ...*, p. 70.

In the 1909 provincial elections, SKZ got the best result since all four its candidates were elected into the provincial assembly: Franc Robič and Ivan Roškar in Ljutomer district, Anton Meško and Jožef Ozmec in Ormož district. A German Josef Ornig, was elected in city curia (Ormož, Ljutomer), Dr. Vekoslav Kukovec, a candidate of NS, was elected in Središče.

There was a political assembly of SKZ in Jastrebcí on 15 August 1909, organized by Anton Meško and Rev. Franc Štuhec. The adherents of NS hindered the assembly by shouting and whistling from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., so that the speakers could not talk and they were forced to conclude the gathering.<sup>15</sup>

The newspaper Straža published a true copy of a letter, sent by priest Zadravec, about these events:

*On August 15, 1909, there was a political assembly of Slovenian farmers' association (SKZ) in the municipality of Jastrebcí. Member of the Provincial Assembly of Styria, Anton Meško, with the help of Rev. Franc Štuhec organized it. This was not a real assembly, but a raving. We know well how wild the liberal youth is here and all those young husbands-fathers, farmers, who not long ago left their bachelorhood and got married. We never thought that liberal Slovenes could be so wild. In order to stage an even greater unruliness, they asked people of Središče to join them. There was a man from Grabe, who raised the roof, helped by two young men with baby voices. There was such shouting and screaming and whistling from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m., it could be heard in the very far away land. The speakers were unable to deliver their speeches; therefore, the president concluded the gathering at 7 p.m. This unruliness was a result of a well-known liberal. Some "swindler" is continued his black work and he graced us with his presence. He has probably sent his missive, which is surely different from this one, to the liberal newspaper. Honest Slovenes are ashamed of this unruliness, although we are not to blame. It was caused by the Liberal Party, which boasts with Ploj – a renegade, a lie and extreme audacity. These are new-age Christians. Ernest Slanc was a headmaster for 16 years. He was officially transferred from Dobova near Brežice, and he started and spread liberalism. Anton Kukovec was from Grabe. The two men, Anton Plepelec and Matija Veselko (son of Bartolo), were from Središče. Jožef Kolarič born in Jastrebcí, now living in Cven, was very eager. Furthermore, there was Ivan Dečko, also known as Solarov Vanč, with a dwarfed nose, swine seller. List, a shoemaker. Especially insolent was Franc Kos, a recruit, for he used curate's first name. Franc*

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<sup>15</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Središču,« Straža, Vol. 1, No. 97 (Maribor, 18 August 1909), p. 3.

*Zabavnik slapped Jožef Munda; Ciril Zabavnik was whistling. Let our descendants know about today's conditions.<sup>16</sup>*

This action was one of the last attempts of NS to enforce their political power, but it has been definitely lost in the combat with SKZ after the war.

The fight between the parties was not limited only to activists and speakers at the political rally. Ordinary people who were followers of either of the parties also did everything to slander or diminish the importance of their political opponents. On 17 January 1910, there was an important parish festival commemorating the patron saint at St. Bolfenk church. Nationalists Vekoslav Štampar, a farmer from Lačaves, and I. Lihtenvalner from Gomila, on the instigation of Ivan Plohl, a superior from Vitan, a liberally oriented municipality, restrained the bellows so it was not possible to play the church organ. The defenders of SKZ were highly offended, so they brought charges against them; and all three involved were imprisoned for eight days and they had to pay for court costs.<sup>17</sup>

The National Party organized political rally on 1 May 1910 at St. Bolfenk. Franc Zabavnik was elected president and the other liberal activists were: his three brothers, Ciril, Jakob and Peter; Lujz Vrabec; Lujz Novak (a vinedresser); Ivan Plohl; Ivan Kosi (a vinedresser); Ivan Vogrinec (a vinedresser); Matija Hlebec; Milan Rubin; and Alojz Kosi. A headmaster, Franc Cajnko, organized the meeting; one of the speakers was Šinko, the mayor of Središče.

SKZ had an assembly on 11 June 1911 and the main speaker was Dermastija. There were liberals and vinedressers present and they obstructed the meeting by shouting and making a racket.<sup>18</sup> The newspaper *Straža* summarized the Kog's correspondent about this event. The article also mentioned Mr. Dermastija, a teacher of school of commerce in Ljubljana, being the speaker. There were a lot of people present since the meeting was held right after the feast of Corpus Christi.

*There was a "gang" of Ploj's people at the meeting and they tried to shout the speaker down. The cream of the liberals was as follows: four Zabavnik's sons (Ciril, Jakob, Franček and Peter); Lujz Vrabl, who even dared to throw mud at Jeglič, the bishop of Ljubljana; Lujz Novak, a vinedresser; Franc Polman, a young man; Franc Cajnko, a son from Jastrebcji; Ivan Plohl, a son of a municipal representative in Vitan; Ivan Kos, a son of a vinedresser; a son of Murat; Ivan Vogrinec, a vinedresser; Ivan Dečko; Mežnarov Nacek (Ignac Robin); Jožef Zadravec, a farmer from Lačaves; Matija Hlebec, a farmer from Lačaves; and sixteen-*

<sup>16</sup> »Politični shod pri Sv. Bolfenku,« *Straža*, Vol. 1, No. 96 (Maribor, 15 August 1909), p. 3.

<sup>17</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Kogu,« *Straža*, Vol. 2, No. 80 (Maribor, 15 July 1910), p. 5.

<sup>18</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Kogu,« *Straža*, Vol. 3, No. 59 (Maribor, 19. June 1911), p. 3.

-year-old boys Milan Robin and Alojzij Kos. Franc Cajnko brought the whistles.<sup>19</sup>

It was a fact that the vinedressers were inclined toward the parties promising them the most. At the parliamentary elections of 1911, the nationalists took the lead since Dr. Ploj offered different support to the vinedressers.

Nationalist Ploj got 165 votes at these elections in St. Bolfenk parish. He got 184 votes at the second (narrower) elections. Brenčič (SKZ) got 117 votes at the first elections, and at the narrower elections he got only 101 votes. A more detailed analysis shows the following results:

<b>Polls</b>	<b>Number of votes</b>	
	<b>Brenčič (SKZ)</b>	<b>Ploj (NS)</b>
Kog – Gomila	27 – 25*	81 – 80*
Jastrebc	26 – 18*	22 – 28*
Vitan – Lačaves	22 – 17*	44 – 58*
Vodranc	42 – 41*	18 – 18*

\* *The results of narrower elections*

The results of these elections did not influence the final consolidation of the SKZ position.

SKZ spread its ideas through the network of existing parishes while NS spread ideas from Središče. For this reason there were many political fights between the two parties in Kog. The National Party slowly started losing its power in Kog because it was not capable of organizing a real resistance to SKZ.

Youth and girls' association<sup>20</sup> had its monthly meeting at St. Bolfenk on 18 July 1913. A new sport section Orel (Eagle) for St. Bolfenk parish was established at this meeting. »Wolfgang's German misses« attacked the members on their way home with rocks and abusive language, which »the liberals were already used to.«<sup>21</sup>

Parliamentary life ceased to exist in Austro-Hungary at the outbreak of World War I. A strict regime began to reign. Political parties were not dissolved, but they were only able to deal with themselves. SKZ joined the Slovenian People's Party (SLS) at the end of 1917.

In Yugoslav Slovenia, belonging to a new country after the war, the three political camps preserved were socialist, clerical, and liberal with their parties, respectively: Yugoslav Social Democratic Party (JSDS), Slovenian People's Party (SLS), and

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> This was the youth wing of SKZ.

<sup>21</sup> »Sv. Bolfenk na Kogu«, *Straža*, Vol. 7, No. 80 (Maribor, 16 July 1913), p. 3.



Yugoslav Democratic Party (JDS), named Liberal Party before the war. Three new parties, alongside the existing, were established at the elections: Independent Agrarian Party (SKS), National Socialist Party (NSS) and Communist Party. There was another party present in Ptuj and Ljutomer districts, called Liberal Party of Prekmurje.

SLS got 46 members of a committee, or 62.1 percent, while all other parties got 28 members, or 27.9 percent, in the municipal elections of 1921 in Jastrebcji, Kog, Vitan, Litmerk and Brebrovnik. The only exception was Vitan municipality, where SKS got 10 members, or 62.4 percent, while SLS got six members, or 27.6 percent. It was again confirmed that Vitan was a typical liberally oriented municipality like before the war.

The January 6th dictatorship brought the so-called movements into Slovene political life. The parliamentary elections of 5 May 1935 brought a stream of indignation and protests. According to people, especially opposing parties, the unpopular Jevtić's great-Serbian regime won by cheating. The radicals and clericals used only their tested methods of blackmail and intimidation in order to keep power. Activists of united opposition were in some places even apprehended and locked up.

Municipal elections were held in Kog in 1936. The members of JRZ<sup>22</sup> made every effort to come to power.<sup>23</sup> Agitation was very strong, »many obvious lies have been told.« Jože Kerenčič's opinion was to put a stop to it.

Members of the Kog's Farmers boys' and girls' association Franc Puklavec, his cousin Martin Puklavec, Ivan Štampar, Stanko Kolbl and Vinko Puklavec tied the long tongues of the JRZ members in November 1936 by using sticks and fists on them. These members were sentenced to from four to seven months in prison for this fight.<sup>24</sup> Municipality Sv. Miklavž was much more peaceful in contrast to Kog municipality.

Vekoslav Štampar, a candidate of the united opposition, wrote an article published in *Svobodna Prlekija* newspaper in June 1955. According to the article, the voters, adherents of government parties, were entertained in specific wine cellars, whereas the voters of the united opposition were slapped if they failed to escape the polls quickly.

The united opposition did not get enough votes (balls). According to Adalbert Slekovec at the assembly of the Historical Society of Ptuj (in 1964), 180 people of Kog voted for the united opposition at the 1935 elections. The same thing happened in Ptuj, where Lacko's list of candidates represented the united opposition.

The result of the May 5 parliamentary elections brought new disappointment to the workers and farmers. People demanded from both candidates of union op-

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<sup>22</sup> JRZ – Jugoslovanska radikalna zajednica was established in autumn of 1935 as the party of the Yugoslav government.

<sup>23</sup> *Zgodovina Slovencev*. (Ljubljana: Cankarjeva založba, 1979), p. 666.

<sup>24</sup> Novak: *Jeruzalemske gorice v 20 stoletju ...*, p. 76; see also Franc Puklavec: »Življenjepis«, Arhiv ZZB NOV Ormož.

position (Vekoslav Štampar and Pavle Horvat), which was not successful at the elections, that they initiate an action against the new government of Milan Stojadinović and Anton Korošec, which was not, according to people, any better than the previous one. There was a big assembly of farmers, workers, and vinedressers in Ljutomer on 18 August 1935. Around 500 people gathered there, although the assembly was prohibited. Since it was raining, Jože Kerenčič from Jastrebcji delivered a short speech, hoisted the forbidden Slovene flag and marched at the head of the crowd going to Ljutomer. The authority banned the meeting; therefore, Kerenčič invited the members to meet on 1 September. A gendarmerie cordon stopped the procession in the end and broke up the crowd.<sup>25</sup>

The aforementioned assembly was only an introduction to the political meeting held on 1 September 1935 in Ljutomer. The primary demands of people who joined the political rally were freedom of speech, freedom of the press, free elections, and other demands for democratization of political life. The chief of Ljutomer authority prohibited the meeting; nevertheless, around one thousand people gathered at the main square at 10 a.m., demonstrating and shouting forbidden slogans.<sup>26</sup> The gendarmerie superior Sergeant Baltič, a Montenegrin, demanded that the demonstrators leave the meeting. Since they did not obey, the fire engine was brought and jets of water were used to disperse the demonstrators. Two shots were heard from the crowd, consequently the gendarmerie shot into the air two times. After the demonstrators started throwing rocks at the gendarmerie, they started shooting into the crowd. Alojz Mavrič from Vitan was killed; Medik from St. Bolfenk in Kog and two other demonstrators were hurt. The demonstrators were finally broken apart and they ran away. Poor crowds, full of unkept promises, were once again disappointed over the regime.

Despite the well-attended meeting in Ljutomer, which was a serious warning for middle-class parties, the JRZ influence on people stayed very strong.

When the Austro-Hungarian monarchy dissolved, a new country called The Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes was formed; nevertheless, not all citizens of German nationality emigrated from the new country. These citizens held strong positions, especially in Jeruzalemske gorice, because of the ownership of vineyards. With the growing power of Germany, especially after annexation of Austria, German citizens in Slovenia started organizing different movements. They had many hidden meetings; one of them was at Fisherauer in Jeruzalem, where they supposedly prepared plans for taking over authority.<sup>27</sup>

General conditions and chaos bordering on anarchy worked in favor of the German movement; poor vinedressers were looking at the German welfare, which led

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<sup>25</sup> Drago Novak: *Prlekija 1941–1945*. (Ljubljana: Založba Borec, 1987), pp. 46–52.

<sup>26</sup> Some authors claim that more thousands people gathered. Compare, Novak: *Prlekija 1941–1945 ...*, p. 46.

<sup>27</sup> Novak: *Prlekija 1941–1945 ...*, pp. 46–52.

vinedressers to make bonfires at Hitler's birthday in 1940. Nevertheless, the rebellion against Nazi propaganda was getting stronger. The members of Sokol associations started with barely successful active resistance in 1936. Some demonstrations were organized.<sup>28</sup>

The last elections to the national assembly in the pre-World War II Yugoslavia were held on 11 December 1938. Stojadinović's JRZ (Yugoslav Radical Union), which was a leading party at that time, won in Kog. The big losers were the parties in united opposition (Maček, communists). Out of 405 eligible voters, 259 people voted; 219 were for Stojadinović's JRZ, represented by Kranjc at the elections. Maček's united oppositions, represented by Kolarič (34 votes), Lacko (six votes) and Vindiš (zero votes), got only forty votes altogether. Ljotičevci, represented by Šega, did not get any votes in Kog. Political fights in Jeruzalemske gorice had various extensions: from national defense to social and health issues.

Right before World War II people were desperately trying to find a way out of the general problems. Some people saw solutions in revolutionary changes; some in the solution coming from a cold northern country. Most people only waited to see what was going to happen.

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.



Joseph C. Evanish<sup>1</sup>

## **VINCENT CAINKAR AND SNPJ**

On Saturday, 18 September 1948, Supreme President of SNPJ Vincent Cainkar and his wife planned to attend another SNPJ event at the SNPJ Hall adjacent to the SNPJ Headquarters on S. Lawndale Avenue, Chicago, Illinois. Prior to the event he stopped at his office at about 9:00 PM where he suddenly became very ill. To his aid came Dr. Joseph Zavertnik. The next day he was taken to the hospital where he was soon after operated on for appendicitis. For five days there were hopes that the Supreme President would pull through and resume his duties leading the Society.

He was 68 years old and in his 29th year as the Society's president. In fact, Vincent Cainkar was the first, and up to that time, SNPJ's only full-time president. He was known by those he worked with as a calm diplomat with the ability for organization; a wise, patient and generous leader. He was an excellent speaker who commanded the attention of his audience. The SNPJ benefited greatly from his skill as a negotiator and his quality as a tactful conciliator.

As a kindly and well-respected leader, he was also well liked. He had a great ability to make friends. Cainkar loved to attend SNPJ events, which he seldom missed. The people loved his presence as he was a good entertainer who enjoyed singing and loved to dance, and made occasions happier because of his participation.

President Cainkar's life journey had humble beginnings. He was born on 22 November 1879 in a small village by the name of Jastrebcı in the Štajerska. After serving three years in the Austro-Hungarian Army, he joined many other young Slovene men and women immigrating to the United States in 1904, which also was the year of our Society's birth. He settled in Butler, Pennsylvania, a suburb of Pittsburgh, where he married Miss Louis Florjanc. The couple had four children. Later, the family moved to Poplar Bluff, Missouri, where they rented a farm, and finally settled in St. Louis where their mother later died of tuberculosis in 1918.

It was in 1909 in St. Louis that Vincent Cainkar became active in the SNPJ and began the role of an organizer. He was chiefly responsible, along with a few others, in starting St. Louis SNPJ Lodge »Planinski Raj« 107. His co-workers and fellow members appreciated his ability and diligence by electing him the new Lodge's first president. That year they also elected him as their first delegate to the fourth Regular SNPJ Convention in Cleveland. It was the greatest honor for one to be elected as a Lodge officer or convention delegate. At that time the SNPJ was young and had been weakened by a bitter internal struggle a few years before.

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph C. Evanish, SNPJ National President.

Vincent Cainkar thus began his fraternal experience as one of the early pioneers of SNPJ. He was a visionary in his ability to consciously understand the significance and importance of SNPJ's current and potential contribution to society and the Slovenian-American community. His sincere and strong desire to help his fellow man would bring him to the highest position in the SNPJ.

In 1912, Vincent was elected chairman of the SNPJ Supreme Supervisory Committee at the 5th Regular SNPJ Convention in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. It was this convention that established the juvenile (youth) department which was a new step for Slovene fraternal organizations.

At the next SNPJ convention, held in 1915 in Pittsburgh, Cainkar was elected recording secretary of the bylaw committee which was responsible for preparing amendments and revisions to the bylaws for the next convention. This convention established the SNPJ's official publication, Prosveta, as a daily newspaper. This, as well as other decisions, helped SNPJ quickly become the largest Slovene fraternal organization in the USA.

Vincent Cainkar played a leading role at the 1918 convention in Springfield, Illinois. He served as speaker for the bylaw committee. Up until this point, SNPJ Supreme (National) Presidents had been part-time positions, and there had been four different presidents in the short period of the Society's existence. This convention decided to make this office a full-time position and elected Vincent Cainkar as its first full-time Supreme President.

Cainkar led the Society through periods of epidemic and influenza that devastated the entire country and created a financial crisis for the SNPJ. There were periods of economic downturn, which included the Great Depression, causing the Society financial hardship. These times included two world wars. However, the SNPJ managed through these periods and challenges not only surviving, but succeeding and flourishing with Vincent Cainkar at the helm.

By 1917 the SNPJ had grown larger than all other Slovene benefit organizations in America. During his tenure as president, the Society membership grew from roughly 23,000 in 1918 to more than 70,000 by 1948. SNPJ's assets also grew from \$466,000 to over \$13 million.

Many convention wishes and programs were implemented under his administrations. In 1922, SNPJ was the first among similar organizations to introduce a monthly magazine for its youth members, titled »Mladinski List.« Later, in 1945, in order to follow the path of assimilation, the magazine's name was changed to »The Voice of Youth.«

Vincent Cainkar's leadership, diplomatic and negotiating skills were invaluable in bringing two significant Slovenian fraternal organizations into the SNPJ through merger: the Slovene Workmen's Benefit Society [Slovenska delavska podporna zveza]

in 1921 and the Slovenian Progressive Benefit Society [Slovenska svobododomiselna podporná zveza] in 1941.

In 1924 the SNPJ printery was established. This helped support and promote the daily Prosveta. It was also a great convenience for the Society which needed all types of forms, stationary and other printed materials.

To keep up with the Society's expansion, additional space at the headquarters was needed. Significant additions were made to the original building, which was constructed in 1916. Building enlargements took place in 1924 and 1936.

Cainkar also played a leadership role in relief efforts for the old homeland. This was in response to natural disasters and the suffering caused by the wars. This diligent work included SNPJ's humanitarian endeavors, as well as his active leadership in other Slovenian relief programs which was in addition to his regular duties as SNPJ's Supreme President.

He believed that it was important to initiate and promote youth programs to ensure that future generations would eventually step into leadership roles. The Cainkar administration encouraged and implemented these programs, along with the SNPJ English Speaking movement which began in 1925 with the best interest of the Society's future in mind.

The personal development and influences in Vincent Cainkar's early years instilled deep-seated values which related to that time period. His social democratic beliefs stemmed from European influences. The endearment that he had for the common working man was born through his own experiences and the realities of the day. Working conditions were deplorable. Vincent Cainkar and the SNPJ founders promoted the ideals of the common working-class people with adamantly strong support of the labor movement.

In the early years of SNPJ's existence, the Society experienced much internal strife. This weakened the SNPJ. There were philosophical differences and struggles for power and control. Vincent Cainkar's involvement in the SNPJ came at a critical time. It was Vincent Cainkar who brought stability to the organization at a time when it was most needed. His sincere desire was to do what was best for the SNPJ and not his own self interest. He instilled this spirit in those around him and the Society's membership.

In the years to follow, he steered the SNPJ through challenging economic and political times with a calm and steady hand. He diplomatically dealt with some of the most intelligent and strong-willed individuals in the Society, Slovenia, the Slovenian-American community, the political arena and the labor movement.

He was by no means a dictator as he truly believed in free thought and the democratic process. Most decisions were made by the SNPJ Executive Committee, the National Board or the Conventions, and at times, through a referendum of the

Society's membership. Over 29 years as Supreme President he chaired a rather large Executive Committee and also chaired the National Board, where he had seen numerous members serve.

Vincent Cainkar's passing came as a great shock to the SNPJ membership, and certainly was an even greater shock to the family. After being elected Supreme President at every convention since 1918, SNPJ's leader died on 24 September 1948.

Since that time, no other SNPJ executive officer has served longer. During the Society's 90th anniversary celebration and grand opening of the new SNPJ Headquarters in 1994 in Imperial, Pennsylvania, the Society proudly dedicated its boardroom in honor of Vincent Cainkar for his outstanding accomplishments and contributions to the Society.



*SNPJ Home Office during the Presidency of Vincent Cainkar.*

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## VINCENT CAINKAR AND THE OLD HOMELAND

### Introduction:

Vincent Cainkar was one of many Slovene immigrants who settled in the U.S. before World War I. Most of Slovenes immigrated to the U.S. at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> and at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some Slovenes came to the U.S. also as political refugees after World War II. Both groups helped to create almost 800 Slovene ethnic settlements.



*Slovene Settlements in the USA.*

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Matjaž Klemenčič, Professor of Newer and Contemporary History at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Maribor.

A Slovene settlement represents part of a township or city with a condensed Slovene inhabited core, in which there is at least one ethnic organizational structure: Lodge(s) of fraternal ethnic organizations; Slovene and mixed Catholic or Protestant parish; Slovene national home; Cultural, secular or sport association; or Editorship of Slovene ethnic newspaper.<sup>2</sup>

It is important to note that still today approximately three quarters of Slovene immigrants in the U.S. and their ancestors live in the cities and townships where in the past Slovene ethnic settlements were created.

The basic form of organizing of Slovene immigrants to the USA represented fraternal benefit societies. These are insurance companies that came into being during the period when the U. S. did not have any kind of insurance, and they have kept their form of organization until today. The fraternal organizations insured workers against accidents at work or illnesses. These organizations used their profits to support cultural and editorial activities of the Slovene immigrants. These are centralized organizations composed of individual lodges that were active or are active in Slovene settlements. Among those still active today are: *American Fraternal Union* with headquarters in Ely, MN which has 15,000 members, *American Mutual Life Association* with headquarters in Cleveland, OH with around 12,000 members, *Slovene National Benefit Society* with headquarters in Imperial, PA, with over 50,000 members, *Western Slavonic Association* with headquarters in Denver, CO, with 6,500 members and *American Slovenian Catholic Union* with headquarters in Joliet, IL with around 30,000 members. The relatively great number of Slovene American fraternal organizations is, on the one hand, a consequence of the dispersed Slovene settlements in the U. S. and, on the other hand, based on ideological differences in part brought from the old homeland and in part a consequence of conditions in the new homeland. The American Slovenian Catholic Union, once named *Grand Carniolian Catholic Union*, demanded that its members be active Catholics; while the Slovene National Benefit Society did not mix the religious beliefs of its members with the operation of the society, because it proclaimed that the religious beliefs of individual members were their private affair. The Slovene National Benefit Society ideologically consisted of two wings, liberal and socialist. The leading members of the Society were active in the socialist workers movement in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Slovenske naselbine v Združenih državah Amerike.« In: Milica Trebše-Štolfa and Matjaž Klemenčič (eds.): *Slovensko izseljenstvo: zbornik ob 50-letnici Slovenske izseljenske matice*. (Ljubljana: Združenje Slovenska izseljenska matica, 2001), pp. 179–186.

<sup>3</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Fraternal Benefit Societies and the Slovene Immigrants in the United States of America.« In: Matjaž Klemenčič (ed.): *Etnični fraternalizem v priseljenskih deželah = Ethnic Fraternalism in Immigrant Countries*. (Maribor: Univerza v Mariboru, 1994), pp. 21–31.

In addition to fraternal benefit societies, Slovene immigrants gathered also in the framework of National Homes, Cultural and Sports Societies, as well as within the ethnic parishes of Catholic and Evangelical Church.<sup>4</sup>

The history of Slovene immigrants after they immigrated to the new homeland could be divided into two parts, i.e. (1) History of the activities of the framework of their special organizations within the new homeland and (2) History of their political activities in connection with political and other events within the old homeland. In both cases both histories are part of Slovene history and also part of immigration history of immigrant countries. With regard to the political activities of Slovene immigrants in the old homeland we have to emphasize that Slovene immigrants could only form political programs and suggest some solutions for the old homeland which Slovene people have to fight for within their ethnic territory on their own.<sup>5</sup>

Especially those individuals who had leading role within organizations of Slovene immigrants to the U.S. could play important role in encouraging activities of Slovene immigrants in connection with the old homeland. One of those was also Vincent Cainkar, who according to the writings of some ethnic newspapers which were published in the U.S., carried with him »... a great deal of will and decisiveness to materialize in public life among Slovene immigrants and help them in the field of to put societal organizing.«<sup>6</sup> Cainkar was in 1909 among the founders of Lodge »Plainski Raj« Nr. 107 of Slovene national benefit Society (SNPJ) in St. Louis, MO.<sup>7</sup> In the same year he attended fourth regular convention of SNPJ,<sup>8</sup> which took place in the mid-October in Cleveland, OH. At this convention he was elected president of Supreme Supervising Committee.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Darko Friš: *Ameriški Slovenci in katoliška cerkev 1871–1924*. (Celovec, Ljubljana, Dunaj: Mohorjeva založba, 1995); Klemenčič, »Slovenske naselbine ...«, pp. 182–183.

<sup>5</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Slovenska izseljenska zgodovina kot del slovenske nacionalne zgodovine: inavguralno predavanje ob izvolitvi v naziv rednega profesorja na Oddelku za zgodovino Filozofske fakultete Univerze v Ljubljani, 8. aprila 1998«, *Zgodovinski časopis*, Vol. 52 (1988), No. 2, p. 180.

<sup>6</sup> »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju,« *Glas naroda*, Vol. 56, No. 193 (New York, 5 October 1948), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> »SNPJ Mourns Passing of Supreme President Cainkar,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 40, No. 191 (Chicago, 29 September 1948), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> »Veličasten pogreb Vincenta Cainkarja,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 40, No. 191 (Chicago, 29 September 1948), p. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Jože Zavertnik: *Ameriški Slovenci: pregled splošne zgodovine Združenih držav, slovenskega naseljevanja in naselbin ter Slovenske narodne podporne jednote*. (Chicago: Slovenska narodna podporna jednote, 1925), p. 583.



*Fourth Regular Convention of SNPJ.*

From then on he was at each convention elected to an important position within SNPJ. At the fifth regular convention in 16 September 1912 in Milwaukee, WI, he was elected Assistant Supreme Secretary and Treasurer of SNPJ;<sup>10</sup> on the sixth regular convention in September 1914 in Pittsburgh, PA, he was elected into a Committee to write the by laws of the SNPJ (together with Ivan Molek, Martin Železnikar, John Goršek and Peter Geshell).<sup>11</sup> Finally, at the seventh regular convention on 16 September 1918 in Springfield, IL, Vincent Cainkar was elected president of SNPJ.<sup>12</sup> He was very beloved among members of SNPJ so that he was elected president on each of succeeding conventions. So he lead SNPJ for more then thirty years until his untimely death on 25 September 1948. American-Slovene newspaper *Glas naroda* [Voice of the People] wrote on this occasion, that Cainkar »... *as most of our important people among Slovene immigrants in America ... taught himself – i.e. he gathered his own knowledge, while working for the public, for SNPJ and for societal affairs.*«<sup>13</sup>

### ***Vincent Cainkar and World War I***

Cainkar worn inside according to some articles of Slovene-American newspapers »*the principles of social consciousness, which inside the man put him to work for the good of people's masses.*«<sup>14</sup> In accordance with this he anxiously followed the events in the old homeland during the World War I. Similarly as the other members of the SNPJ he joined the movement to create democratic political unit of Yugoslav

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 588.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, p. 603.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p. 613.

<sup>13</sup> »Veličasten pogreb Vincenta Cainkarja,« ..., p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju,« ..., p. 3.

peoples. He was encouraged by revolution in Russia in 1917 and entry of the USA into the World War. The movement was named Slovene Republican Alliance in August 1917. In September 1918, Cainkar took part at the first convention of this Alliance<sup>15</sup> as representative of the local organization of the Alliance from St. Louis, MO.

Slovene Republican Alliance wanted Yugoslavia to be established as federal republic—the U.S. system would be copied—in the framework of which Slovenia would have a status of autonomous republic.<sup>16</sup> Already in the end of 1917 the members of Slovene Republican Alliance started to gather funds for »One Million Dollars Fund.« The money was to be used to propagate republican form of social order in the old homeland and for propaganda to secure just borders for Slovenia.<sup>17</sup> From the end of 1918 the Alliance directed most of its activities towards a just solution of the border question, especially in the Coastland. The Alliance organized gathering of signatures »in defense of Slovene land« and published special issue of *The Slovenian Review* in which they in great details described especially the situation of Slovenes in the Coastland. In this review they defended with facts their demands for the just solution of the Adriatic question, so that the Coastland would belong to the newly established Yugoslav state.<sup>18</sup> The review which was published in one hundred thousand issues was sent to many representatives of American and European governments and to the leaders and members of the lodges in all large Slovene settlements which they then forwarded to the American local politicians.<sup>19</sup>

With its activities for the old homeland Slovene Republican Alliance gathered many supporters among American Slovenes. With the help of Slovene agitation the movement spread also among American Croats who first established Croatian Republican Alliance. In April 1919 also Yugoslav Republican Alliance was established. This movement had also the support of Serbian socialists in the U.S.<sup>20</sup>

### ***Cainkar in the Period between the Two World Wars***

Cainkar as president of SNPJ in September 1919 signed the Festschrift »Appeal to the President and People of the U.S. in Defense of Yugoslav Nation« which rep-

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<sup>15</sup> Anton J. Terbovec, »Druga redna konvencija Slovenskega republičanskega združenja,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 11, No. 211 (Chicago, 9 September 1918), p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji: naseljevanje zemljepisna razprostranjenost in odnos ameriških Slovencev do stare domovine od sredine 19. stoletja do konca druge svetovne vojne*. (Maribor: Založba Obzorja, 1987), pp. 114–115.

<sup>17</sup> *Spominska knjiga: prva serija prostovoljnega narodnega davka*. (New York and Washington: Studia Slovenica, 1971), p. 55.

<sup>18</sup> Compare, *The Slovenian Review - Official Organ of Slovenian Republican Alliance*, Vol. 2, No. 4 (Chicago, 1 December 1918).

<sup>19</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, pp. 118–119.

<sup>20</sup> »Jugoslovansko republičansko združenje,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 12, No. 84 (Chicago, 9 April 1919), p. 4; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 119.

representatives of twelve fraternal benefit societies of Yugoslav immigrants in the U.S. addressed to the U.S. President, Woodrow Wilson. The signatories of the festschrift which represented the top of attempts of Yugoslav Americans to secure just solution of the frontier questions of the new Yugoslav state,<sup>21</sup> wrote that the cessation of western parts of Slovene and Croatian territory to Italy would work negatively to the peaceful co-existence among the peoples of Europe. In connection with this they wrote that the conditions »*in this part of the world in the period from the signing of London Agreement in 1915 until March 1920 changed very much.*« They had in mind the dissolution of Austria-Hungary and establishment of many new countries; among them also Yugoslav. In the festschrift they specially emphasized the consequences of the Italian annexation of the Coastland because for Slovenes »*the succession of 400,000 Yugoslav souls from their total number of 1,5 million would mean the death blow ...*« In addition to the economic consequences also wishes »... *for healthy bases for future healthy relations among all the nations, especially among Yugoslavs and Italians ...*« because only in that case »... *the glorious ideals for which the human beings bled and died ...*« during the World War I. could be fulfilled.<sup>22</sup>

Members of Slovene Republican Alliance sent the demands for the »just« solution of Adriatic question, which would mean the annexation of Slovene Coastland, Istria, the Kvarner Islands, and Dalmatia to Yugoslavia, in cooperation with other Yugoslav organizations to the Paris Peace Conference. In this Memorandum they described in great details the ethnic situation in the Coastland. They emphasized that annexation of (ethnic) pure Slovenian and Croatian territories »... *would preoccupy Italy with 'national question' which Italy do not know how to deal with and it would only increase Italy's internal troubles.*«<sup>23</sup>

As we have already mentioned, Slovene (from April Yugoslav) Republican Alliance gathered also material help for the old homeland. With the part of money which the Alliance gathered to materially help to the old homeland they bought a publishing press (*Blaznikova tiskarna*) which was ruined during the economic crisis in 1930s.<sup>24</sup> Also SNPJ was part of the gathering effort on the basis of individual contributions of the members of SNPJ for which the leadership of SNPJ asked its members in numerous articles in *Prosveta*.

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<sup>21</sup> Matjaž Klemenčič, »Vloga Mihajla Idvorskega Pupina v političnem življenju srbskih in ostalih jugoslovanskih izseljencev v ZDA pred in med prvo svetovno vojno in njegova prizadevanja za jugoslovanske meje po prvi svetovni vojni.« In: Vladimir Klemenčič (ed.): *Mihajlo I. Pupin: znanstvenik, politik, gospodarstvenik*. (Ljubljana: Inštitut za geografijo Univerze Edvarda Kardelja in Zveza organizacij za tehnično kulturo Slovenije, 1980), p. 54.

<sup>22</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 131; Klemenčič, »Vloga Mihajla Idvorskega Pupina v političnem življenju ...«, p. 55.

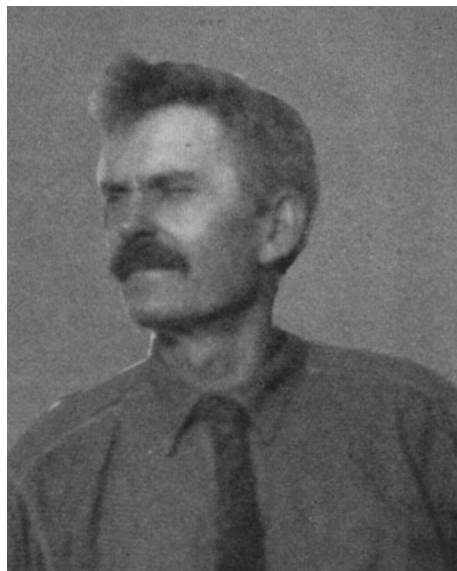
<sup>23</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 133.

<sup>24</sup> Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. File: Yugoslav Republican Alliance, Box 2; Immigration History Research Center, University of Minnesota, St. Paul. File: Yugoslav Socialist Alliance, Box 22–26; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 135.





*Ivan Molek.*



*Jože Zavertnik.*

After delimitations with Italy in Coastland and with Austria in Carinthia did not went in favor of new Yugoslav state and also the idea of Yugoslav federal republic was not materialized, the Yugoslav Republican Alliance after the convention of 1921 ceased its operation. The rest of the money which was to be used for political activities was given to administer to SNPJ and Yugoslav Socialist Federation.<sup>25</sup> Part of this money was used for political action of Slovene American National Council during the World War II.

American Slovenes retained contacts with the old homeland also between the two World Wars. Especially important role in this was played by the organ of SNPJ *Prosveta* which in addition to articles on conditions in the USA and Europe published also the reports on societal affairs and the news from the old homeland. Among the latter the news on »common man« prevailed while one could not find the news on political life in the homeland with the exception on the reports of greater crisis. The newspaper itself had quite an influence on the life inside the Slovene ethnic community and in this period performed three important functions: it helped maintain connection with the old homeland; it conveyed the information on the new homeland and also information on Slovene immigrants to the USA. This deepened the feelings of Slovene immigrants to the USA and their ancestors towards the old homeland in spite of the fact that they lived quite a few thousands of miles away.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, pp. 132–135.

<sup>26</sup> Klemenčič Matjaž, »Slovene Periodicals in the USA, 1891–1920,« *Razprave in gradivo*, No. 55 (2008), pp. 109–110; Nives Sulič, »Izseljenski časopis Prosveta skozi prizmo etnologa,« *Znanstvena revija - Humanistika*, Vol. 3 (1991), No. 2, pp. 333–339.

In spite of the fact that Prosveta very seldom report on political events on the old homeland, the leadership of SNPJ was quite informed on the political events there. This could be proven also by the resolution which was passed by the ninth regular convention of SNPJ in Chicago, IL, which took place between 19 and 25 May 1929. In this resolution they condemned the abandonment of parliamentary democracy and so called »Dictatorship of Sixth of January« in Yugoslavia and demanded the re-establishment of political parties and Trade Unions. In resolution they also expressed wish for Yugoslavia to be renamed into Balkan Federation and to be divided into several republics.<sup>27</sup>

The American Slovenes within the SNPJ retained connections with the old homeland also in the other ways. Ivan Molek, the editor of Prosveta, himself took care for The Dynamite<sup>28</sup> by American writer of Slovene ancestry Louis Adamic for which he received Guggenheim Prize to come into Ljubljana University Library.<sup>29</sup>

Important were also organized trips to the old homeland. One of those was organized by SNPJ in 1932 when the leaders of cultural and political life of American Slovenes met with important individuals of Slovene cultural and political life in the homeland.<sup>30</sup> This affection and interest for the events in the old homeland were mostly present in the first generation of American Slovenes to which also Cainkar belonged and it was very important for the political decision making of American Slovenes during the World War II.

## **Vincent Cainkar and World War II**

After Germany, Italy and their allies in April 1941 attacked and occupied Yugoslavia, Slovene immigrants and their descendants in the U.S. reacted sharply to the genocide and violence in the homeland. Vincent Cainkar was among the first who asked for the help to the Slovenes in the homeland by American Slovenes. *Prosveta* already on 16 April 1941 published an »An Appeal for Help to War Victims of Yugoslavia.« In this Appeal it was written among other:

*»... The wild hordes of ruthless dictators have invaded the country, killing and destroying performing their blood mission upon Yugoslav soil. All that is necessary for livelihood will be destroyed and starvation ... This means that our assistance is sorely needed ...*

*Consequently, brothers and sisters it is necessary that we help these unfortunates [in old homeland] as much as we possibly can.*

<sup>27</sup> Jay Sedmak: *An Inspired Journey. The SNPJ Story: The First One Hundred Years of the Slovene National Benefit Society.* (Imperial, PA: Slovene National Benefit Society, 2004), p. 37.

<sup>28</sup> Louis Adamič: *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America.* (New York: Viking Press, 1934).

<sup>29</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 136.

<sup>30</sup> Ivan Molek: *Slovene Immigrant History 1900–1950: Autobiographical Sketches.* (Dover, DE: Mary Molek, 1979), pp. 227–232; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 136.

*The executive committee has already taken steps towards this action...»<sup>31</sup>*

American Slovenes and their organizations have reacted quickly to the call of Prosveta. Representatives of fraternal benefit organizations already on 19 April established on a proposal from American Fraternal Union Yugoslav Relief Committee - Slovene Section [Jugoslovanski pomožni odbor – Slovenska sekcija; JPO-SS). At a meeting held under the leadership of Cainkar in the conference room of SNPJ in Chicago,<sup>32</sup> they wrote in a special »Declaration to the American Slovenes« among other:

*»... We would be unworthy of freedom and security we enjoy in a democratic America ... – if we would not be not outraged because of crimes which were effective with indescribable cynicism in Yugoslavia, if we would not condemn this barbaric acts of Nazi Germany ...*

*But we know that just indignation and sympathies alone are not enough. Our old country needs at this moment much more ...*

*In this context, and on the directions of the executive committee of our fraternal benefit organizations, we are gathered on this day to lay solid foundations for relief campaign for the poorest in Yugoslavia in the firm hope that our campaign will achieve its purpose, and that this relief will reach the neediest in our old country, without distinction, what they are and who they are to be achieved without the barriers and discrimination immediately or as quickly as physically possible.«<sup>33</sup>*

In Declaration they also among others formulated the aims of JPO-SS:

- *»Establishment of the Central Committee in the name of and under the control of our fraternal benefit organizations which will lead the campaign for the support of the American Slovenes for our old homeland; this committee should be a link between the organizations of American Slovenes and the American Red Cross or any other authority of the United States, which will give all necessary communications; this committee may also be involved with the same committees of the Croats and Serbs, so that all Yugoslav ethnic solidarity will be shown in this regard;*
- *Receiving cash contributions accumulated under the control of fraternal benefit organizations and reporting on contributions to the*

<sup>31</sup> Vincent Cainkar, »An Appeal for Help to War Victims of Yugoslavia,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 75 (Chicago, 16 April 1941), p. 1.

<sup>32</sup> »Zborovanje slovenskih podpornih organizacij dne 19. aprila 1941 v gl. stanu SNPJ, Chicago, Illinois,« *Amerikanski Slovenec*, Vol. 50, No. 84 (Joliet, 30 April 1941), p. 5.

<sup>33</sup> »Ameriškim Slovencem: Izjava Jugoslovanskega pomožnega odbora, organiziranega v Chicagu 19. aprila 1941,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 80 (Chicago, 21 April 1941), p. 1.

*organs of fraternal organizations. The Committee will be responsible to Slovene fraternal benefit organizations and will lead the activities for 'publicity' in the organs of Fraternal benefit organizations and other Slovene American newspapers, which will also serve as organs of Yugoslav relief activities;*

- *Committee will be active strictly within the limits of its humanitarian activities and will ensure that no one will use it for any political or other purposes and will be active in everything what our fraternal benefit organization, to which it is responsible, will order.»<sup>34</sup>*

For the President of JPO-SS was elected Vincent Cainkar, Supreme President of SNPJ.<sup>35</sup> JPO-SS was the first joint campaign of catholic and liberal-oriented American-Slovene leaders during the World War II. This cooperation has occurred thanks to Joseph Zalar, the then secretary of Grand Carniolan Slovenian Catholic Union. However, since he has not previously consulted with other leaders of Slovene American Catholic organizations, such cooperation has aroused much criticism. Particularly sharply criticizing this action were Slovene priests, who were active in the U.S. In October 1942 they criticized particularly the fact that the establishing meeting of JPO-SS took place in the conference room SNPJ, which was the »center of liberal and socialist minded Slovene Americans.« They criticized also the fact that Vincent Cainkar who was the President of SNPJ was elected President of the JPO-SS.

On 10 May 1941, at the initiative of the Croatian Fraternal Union, the representatives of Croatian, Serbian and Slovene fraternal benefit organizations gathered in the Slovene National Home in Cleveland and agreed to coordinate action in connection with collecting funds to help the old country. They formed Yugoslav Relief Committee from Slovene, Croat and Serb sections. William M. Boyd (Boič), who was the vice-president of Croatian Fraternal Union, became the president of the JPO-SS, while Vincent Cainkar and Serb representative Sime Vrljinić became vice-presidents.<sup>36</sup> JPO-SS soon organized branches in all major Slovene settlements in the U.S.

In the bleak atmosphere of the Second World War, in mid-September 1941 the twelfth regular SNPJ Convention was convened. Because of the war in Europe, the delegates of the convention focused the debate on division of Yugoslavia, especially on occupation of Slovenia and its division among Germany, Italy and Hungary. They adopted a resolution in five points in which they:

1. Condemned Fascism and Nazism, and expressed hope in democracy;

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> »Jugoslovanski pomožni odbor,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 78 (Chicago, 21 April 1941), p. 1; »Zborovanje slovenskih podpornih organizacij dne 19. aprila 1941 v gl. stanu SNPJ, Chicago, Illinois,« *Amerikanski Slovenec*, Vol. 50, No. 84 (Joliet, 30. April 1941), p. 5.

<sup>36</sup> »Resolucija o svrhi, sestavi in načinu dela Jugoslovanskega pomožnega odbora v Ameriki,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 108 (Chicago, 4 June 1941), p. 3; Stjepan Lojen: *Uspomene jednog iseljenika*. (Zagreb: Znanje, 1963), p. 208.

2. Welcomed the support of Roosevelt administration to Great Britain and to the Soviet Union in their fight against Germany and Italy;
3. Confirmed support for Slovenia and offered help to rebuild Yugoslavia after the war;
4. Expressed their agreement with the activities of the Yugoslav government in an effort to liberate the country (then in the absence of information from the old country as a leader Liberation Movement was considered Draža Mihailović); and
5. Ordered Supreme Committee of SNPJ and *Prosveta* to ensure as wide as possible support of the other organizations of American Slovenes for the materialization of the first four points of the resolution.<sup>37</sup>

The Convention passed also a special resolution of support of the SNPJ Executive Committee in support of JPO-SS. It also passed another resolution to ensure the maintenance of membership in SNPJ to all those who have been called in the American army. There were up to a thousand members of SNPJ, including vice-president of SNPJ Michael Kumer, who were called in American Army and they all retained membership in SNPJ. Kumer also retained the position of vice-president of SNPJ.<sup>38</sup>

Since the first meeting of JPO-SS its members were thinking about how the American Slovenes should begin with a political campaign in connection with the old homeland. Also those people who came from Yugoslavia just before the occupation (the Yugoslav émigré government, Father Kazimir Zakrajšek, Father Bernard Ambrožič etc.) encouraged these endeavors. The question of political action among the American Slovenes was touched upon Vincent Cainkar at the meeting of JPO-SS on 16 October, 1941, when he warned the present *"that no one knows what will the near future bring and that this time we [the American Slovenes] should not be found unprepared when there again the borders and the fate of Slovenia would be determined."* Representatives of individual fraternal benefit organizations agreed with Cainkar that JPO-SS *"could lead also political activities for the old country,"* but it would have to be decided by the supreme committees of organizations that formed the JPO-SS. On the necessity of political action of the American Slovenes also Minister of the Yugoslav Government-in-Exile Franc Snoj, spoke as he came into the hall after the meeting of JPO-SS. In a long speech he explained the situation in Slovenia and around the world and the position of the Yugoslav Government-in-Exile in London and promised that he will urge the Slovenian fraternal organizations to participate in political activities regarding the old homeland.<sup>39</sup>

Cainkar called a meeting of representatives of the Slovenian American fraternal benefit and political organizations for 15 November 1941. The meeting was attend-

<sup>37</sup> Sedmak: *An Inspired Journey ...*, pp. 56–57; »Dvanajsta redna konvencija SNPJ: Enajsta seja, 19. septembra,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 191 (Chicago, 1 October 1941), p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Sedmak: *An Inspired Journey ...*, pp. 59–60; »Dvanajsta redna konvencija SNPJ ...«, p. 3.

<sup>39</sup> »Vesti s seje pomožnega odbora,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 204 (Chicago, 20 October 1941), p. 1; »Urednikove pripombe: Politična akcija za staro domovino,« *Prosveta*, Vol. 33, No. 204 (Chicago, 20 October 1941), p. 4.

ed by other representative of SNPJ (Ivan Molek, chief editor of *Prosveta*), KSKJ (Joseph Zalar), AFU (Janko Rogelj Zbašnik Anton, Frank Vraničar), Western Slavonic Association (Leo Jurjevec), Holy Family Society (John Vidic), Slovenian Women's Union (Marie Priland, Mary Tomažin) and the Yugoslav Socialist Alliance (Etbin Kristan, Frank Zaitz). As a representative of SNPJ Ivan Molek submitted a proposal on the principles of political activities of the American Slovenes during the World War II and emphasized:

- *The willingness of American Slovenes to continue to fully support the allies in the fight against Fascism, as if they win the liberation would also come to Slovenes;*
- *Because the official representatives of Slovenes in the old country said that the political future depends on us Americans Slovenes and that we must speak for them when they must be silent, and warned us that the time has come when we can start a political campaign for the old homeland and in favor of Roosevelt and the representatives of England and Russia;*
- *The American Slovenes should tell [the leaders of England and Russia] that for the future development of the Slovene people, which should be marked by freedom and democracy is absolutely necessary that they [the Slovenes] are politically united in one whole [unit] ...*

It should be noted that American Slovenes had not yet had a clear program for the future destiny of the United Slovenia. Mainly they did not want to restore the »old Yugoslavia,« but have considered the possibility that the *“united Slovenia in the future in the framework of a larger Federation, either in the Balkans or in central Europe ...”*

At the end of the meeting Etbin Kristan submitted a resolution adopted by all participants of the meeting in which he wrote:

*The representatives of seven Slovenian centralized fraternal and political organizations in America gathered at a meeting at the premises of SNPJ in Chicago, Ill. at 15 November concluded:*

1. *That, with respect to the global situation and the disastrous shock which hit the Slovene nation, political action of American Slovenians who are called to speak for the Slovenes in the old country is required, and that they [American Slovenes] will do whatever necessary until the last shackles of the Slovenes in the homeland fall off their hands;*
2. *That for that purpose Slovene National Congress be convened to put the basis for a successful campaign with the aim to achieve the unification of all Slovenes in the European democratic political*

*form in the context of the renewed, democratized, Yugoslav, Balkan, and finally the European Federation;*

3. *That a Committee<sup>40</sup> was elected to make arrangements for the Slovene National Congress, and to implement the necessary preliminary work for the Congress.*

With regard to the issue of the above mentioned Congress and some news about events in the old country, Louis Adamic on the 4 January 1942, convened a meeting of representatives of American Slovenes in Cleveland, to which he invited Fr. Bernard Ambrožič, Vincent Cainkar, Leo Jurjevec, Etbin Kristan, Marie Prisland, Janko Rogelj, Fr. Kasimir Zakrajšek and Joseph Zalar. The meeting was attended also by the members of the Yugoslav Government-in-Exile Franc Snoj and Boris Furlan and Frank Lausche, Mayor of Cleveland.<sup>41</sup> At the meeting they discussed the continuation of political activities of American Slovenes in regard of the old homeland under the State Department guidelines on the »free movements« of American citizens who are members of immigrant communities, and their interest in events in the old countries.<sup>42</sup> Additionally they also discussed about the wishes of Italy to annex Dalmatia and Otto von Habsburg's campaigns for the creation of the Danube Federation.<sup>43</sup>

The need for political action of American Slovenes in particular has been shown after the geography professor at Columbia University in New York George T. Renner published a map of Europe in *Colliers* magazine, according to which Slovenian ethnic territory was divided between Italy and Austria. According to this map also Dalmatia, Istria, and Montenegro would belonged to Italy.<sup>44</sup> Given the bad experience the Slovenes had from the period after World War I, Vincent Cainkar on 7 June 1942, called a meeting of the JPO-SS in Cleveland. In addition to representatives of the Slovenian national fraternal benefit societies and political organizations he also invited the editors of most of the American Slovenian newspapers, the writer Louis Adamic, representative of Cleveland Mayor Frank Lausche, John Lokar, some Yugoslav refugee government ministers and several other prominent of individuals. Cainkar invited those present to discuss the political campaign in America and the world for the achievement of United Slovenia, which Renner's position as well as other similar positions damaged. At this meeting the political action committee was elected. Its

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<sup>40</sup> Committee was comprised of Leo Jurjovec, Janko Rogelj, Marie Prisland, John Vidic, Ivan Molek, Josip Zalar, Frank Zaitz and Etbin Kristan.

<sup>41</sup> Chicago Historical Society, File: Molek Papers. Letter from Louis Adamic to Bernard Ambrožič, Vincent Cainkar, Vatroslav Grillu, Leo Jurjevec, Etbin Kristan, Ivan Molek, Marie Prisland, Janko Rogelj, Kazimir Zakrajšek and Josip Zalar, 28 December 1941.

<sup>42</sup> Archive of Yugoslavia, File: Personal Papers of Sava Kosanović, SK 33/15, Letter from Molek to Ambrožič, 11 May 1941.

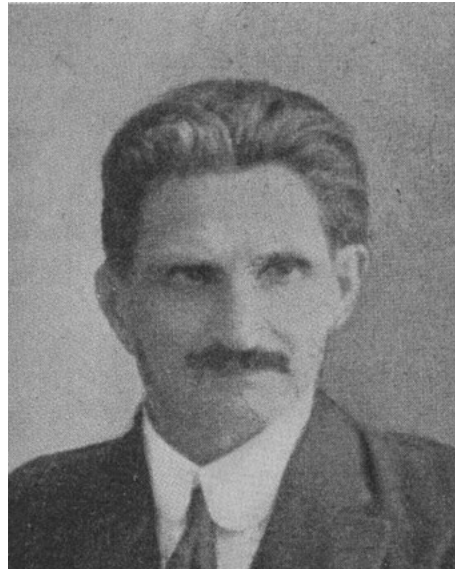
<sup>43</sup> Archive of Yugoslavia, File: Personal Papers of Sava Kosanović, SK 33/15, unsigned letter to Marie Prisland, 30 January 1942; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji* ..., pp. 179–180.

<sup>44</sup> George T. Renner, »Maps for A New World,« *Collier's*, Vol. 109, No. 23 (New York, 6 June 1942), pp. 14–16, 28.

members were James Debevec, Josko Penko, Anton Šabec, James W. Mally, Josie Zakrajsek, Etbín Kristan, F. M. Surtz, Vatroslav Grill and Ivan Molek.<sup>45</sup>



*Kazimir Zakrajšek.*



*Etbín Kristan.*

When at the end of June 1942 the organ of the U.S. Communist party *Daily Worker* published an article in which he condemned the Mihailović Chetniks collaboration with the Nazis,<sup>46</sup> it led to the first serious friction among American Slovene leaders. Also the participation of some American Slovenes at a reception for the Yugoslav King Peter, who visited the United States at the end of July 1942, deepened this friction. American Slovenes, who attended the reception, were acting on behalf of the American Slovenian national union, which was founded by Joseph W. Mally with the help of other members of the political action committee from Cleveland, OH (Grill, Zakrajšek, etc.). Because of these tensions at a meeting of JPO-SS on 12 September 1942 in Chicago political action committee was dissolved. At this meeting members of the JPO-SS supported the proposal of the Slovenian Women's Union on the convening of Slovenian American National Congress. They decided that all members of committees of centralized Slovene organizations could participate at the congress, that all local Slovene organizations and other institutions could send one delegate. The right to participate would also have the editors of all Slovenian newspapers, which were published in the U.S. At the 20<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Steering Committee October 1942, they decided that the congress will address three main issues »War and American Slovenes«, »The situation of the Slovenes in Yugoslavia and bordering countries« and »Political Action of American Slovenes.« For the re-

<sup>45</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 189.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 194.



porter for the first theme they suggested Adamič, for the second Etbin Kristan and for the third Cainkar.<sup>47</sup>

Slovene American National Congress met on 5 December 1942 at the Slovenian National Home in Cleveland. It was attended by 528 delegates of all Slovene fraternal, cultural and political organizations, and representatives of all factions in the Slovene American ethnic and political movements: socialists and liberals and priests. It was attended by some representatives of the Yugoslav government in exile (Franc Snoj, Boris Furlan, Miha Krek and Konstantin Fotić) and Frank Lausche who represented the U.S. government. The congress's third Committee on issues, chaired by Cainkar, presented a resolution on establishing of a Slovene American National Council (SANC), which should in the future, coordinate and lead the political campaign of American Slovenians. For the President of the SANC was elected Etbin Kristan, and Louis Adamic was elected honorary president.<sup>48</sup> The latter, used his connections in Washington, D.C. to organize the meeting of the representatives of SANC on 15 January 1943 with the Director of the Office of Strategic Services DeWitt Poole and Undersecretary of State Sumner Wells,<sup>49</sup> which also Cainkar attended. The delegation delivered a special memorandum to Wells, where it was described, who are the Slovenes and what is their geographical position. The fact was emphasized that after the First World War the Slovene ethnic territory was divided between the four countries. Memorandum has also told the story of the fate of the Slovene people after the occupation of Yugoslavia, particularly about the fascist violence and rebellion against the forces of the axis of the Slovenes. And precisely this resistance should give the Slovene people "... *the right to a better future, which would be possible only in one political unit with broad autonomy in a free and democratic Federal Republic of Yugoslavia in the federated Balkans in the federated free Europe.*"<sup>50</sup>

It is necessary to mention that before the meeting, a dispute arose between Father Kazimir Zakrajšek and other members of the delegation, after Zakrajšek suggested that they should inform Wells that "*Slovene villages or part of these villages are now guarded by young Slovene guys*" who were the followers of »Slovene commitment« [Slovenska zaveza] an organization of prewar political parties, "*who defend the villages against evil Slovenian communists.*" Zakrajšek suggested however that they should not tell Wells that "*these young men got the arms from the Italians.*" After that dispute Cainkar started to believe that Zakrajšek was inclined to serve Italian and Austrian interests.<sup>51</sup> Cainkar wrote about this in his letter to Adamic, which he wrote on 6 February 1943 that in his opinion, disputes between Zakrajšek and

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., pp. 190–197.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., pp. 214–218.

<sup>49</sup> Archive of Yugoslavia, File: Personal Papers of Sava Kosanović, 83/15, Letter from Kosanović to La Guardia, 3 September 1942.

<sup>50</sup> Archive of Slovenia, File: SANS, Box 3, Memorandum Submitted to the Department of State, Friday, 15 January 1943, by the Delegation of the Slovenian American National Council, Representing Americans of Slovene Extraction; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, pp. 214–217.

<sup>51</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 218.

Snoj were only apparent, in fact, they cooperated with each other for goals (to restore the monarchy), which are contrary to the objectives of the Slovene community in the U.S., and therefore he would not have anything against Zakrajšek's resignation from the position of Secretary of SANC.<sup>52</sup>

Zakrajšek, after these events, on the second meeting of SANC on 27 February 1943 resigned his position as secretary of SANC;<sup>53</sup> his job was taken over by auxiliary secretary Mirko Kuhelj. As the treasurer of SNPJ Kuhelj, who was regularly employed there, he had to obtain permission from SNPJ which gave it to him.

Adamic and Kristan as leaders of the Slovenian Americans soon came to associate also with leading members of the other Yugoslav immigrant communities in the U.S. Thus, Adamic on 18 May 1943 in New York convened a meeting of representatives of American Slovenes, Serbs and Croats with the aim to discuss the establishment of a common organization. This should not only help the old country, but should help to defuse conflicts between American Serbs and American Croats which till September 1942 had reached such proportions that the U.S. government had to intervene.<sup>54</sup> On 18 June 1943 Etbín Kristan, Mirko Kuhelj, Cainkar and Rogelj met with four representatives of the U.S. Croatian National Congress of Croatian and Serbian Vidovdans. Congress and concluded that the new Committee the Joint Committee of South Slavic Americans (ZOJSA) would become the coordinating body of all the Yugoslav organizations.<sup>55</sup> The purpose of the committee was to help homeland during the Second World War and to influence U.S. policy. Its aim was also to convince the American public to respond to the future events in the Balkans the same way as to the events in Ohio, California or Michigan. Members of ZOJSA advocated the inclusion in a future South Slav state of all the areas populated by Slovenes and Croats, which were before the Second World War under the Italian, Austrian or Hungarian rule. ZOJSA argued for moral support and material assistance to national liberation movements in South Slavic lands. In this respect, they acted against the myth of the struggle led by Draža Mihailović Chetniks against occupying forces in Yugoslavia and the United Nations and the U.S. government. ZOJSA suggested to the American government to establish contacts with AVNOJ.

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<sup>52</sup> National University Library, Manuscript Collection, File: Adamič, Letter from Vincent Cainkar to Adamic, 6 February 1943; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, p. 220

<sup>53</sup> Archive of Slovenia, File: Slovenska izseljenska matica, Letter from Fr. Kazimir Zakrajšek to Slovenian American National Council, 27 February 1943 – published in Darko Friš: *Korespondenca Kazimirja Zakrajška, O.F.M. (1928–1958)* (=Viri, 8). (Ljubljana: Arhivsko društvo Slovenije, 1985), pp. 180–183.

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Mirko Markovič: *O razvoju narodnog pokreta kod Amerikanaca in Kanađana jugoslavenskog porijekla Jugoslovenski narodni pokret u SAD i Kanadi 1939–1945* (=Izdanje Nardem Yugoslav Published). (Toronto, 1983), p. 45.

<sup>55</sup> Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, pp. 232–233.



*Luis Adamič.*



*Mirko Kuhelj.*

Support for the partisan movement in the country for which ZOJSA and SANC strived caused problems not only for the unity between Slovenian American socialists and liberals on the one hand and Catholics on the other (left and right-wing), but also within individual immigrant organizations. There was disagreement even within the SNPJ namely between the leaders of SNPJ and editor of *Prosveta* Ivan Molek. He implied that he was keen socialist while a strong opponent of communism. Therefore it should be considered that an American organization, such as the SNPJ should not support the liberation movement in the homeland, in which the Communists had a leading role. Since Molek insisted on his position, he had to resign on the pressure of SNPJ management. In March 1944 he resigned as editor of *Prosveta* and other publications of SNPJ.<sup>56</sup>

The more events were reported from the old country, the harder it was to maintain unity in the movement of American Slovenes. New disagreements occurred at the meeting of the Executive Committee of SANC on the 12 April 1944, when Joseph Zalar, one of the leaders of the Catholic-oriented American Slovenes, blamed SANC as biased, since it favored only the partisan movement. In the turbulent debate also Fr. Ambrožič strongly opposed any support for national liberation movement in Yugoslavia. He appeared with some declarations by the Slovenian Socialist Party in Yugoslavia as well as some other opponents of the Liberation Front especially with the documents of the »Slovene Commitment« he obtained through the intermediary of the Yugoslav government in exile in London. In the turbulent debate in which also Cainkar participated and he said among other things:

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., pp. 243–249.

*»We all intend to help people at home, as much as possible. So I feel sorry if some people would like to broke SANC's unity ... The main thing is to ascertain if the SANS did that for what it was established by the National Congress, I am working in this context and I will continue. We are all for the new Yugoslavia. But what kind of Yugoslavia? Fascist? Or dictatorial? No! We gave moral support Ribar's new government, which aims its program for the same goals as we had imagined in America. We support it one hundred percent . . . SANC is on the same side as Liberation Front. And like its political program, which is our slice. If there is any other organization in Slovenia, we do not know anything about it, nor about its program. If it is true what Fr. Ambrožič says about a tiny minority of the people who support the Liberation Front how can it control the whole country? Report of the President of the SANC at a broader meeting of the committee was adopted with great enthusiasm and satisfaction. But now Fr. Ambrožič wants to show that the work of SANC is wrong ... Fr. Ambrožič argues that the SANC activities are in conflict with the wishes of the majority of our nation. I do not understand how people can oppose the program of Liberation Front in the old country, which is our slice and which he viewed as a democratic ideal?*

*Nation at home is Catholic, not communist. If people at home want change, then something is wrong with the system under which they were [in the interwar period] in and against which they fight.«<sup>57</sup>*

After heated discussions Mary Priland and Zalar resigned as representatives of SANC in ZOJSA. Soon after, they also resigned as SANC members. Despite the ideological differentiation in SANC, its action in favor of the Liberation War in Yugoslavia enjoyed support by the majority of American Slovenes. Among them were the priest George Trunk and KSKJ president John Germ.<sup>58</sup>

After these events, most of the activity of SANC shifted to solving Trieste and Carinthia questions in favor of Slovenes. In addition to political campaigns, American Slovenes during and especially after the Second World War focused a considerable part of the activities also on raising funds to help the old country. This assistance was collected in campaigns of relief activities of the Union of Slovenian parishes, within the Yugoslav auxiliary committee -Slovene section and SANC in the framework of the War Relief Fund of the Americans of South Slavic Descent. It is interesting in particular the fact that the SANC and JPO-SS raised funds separately, as some members of JPO - SS feared that the money collected would not be spent in Slovenia. Although this separation did not have exactly encouraging effect on the intensity of collection, the Slovenian Americans collected much material aid for the

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 260.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, p. 251.

old homeland. With the money collected by the SANC they built in Ljubljana pediatric clinic, and some other facilities, with the money collected by the JPO-SS medical devices were purchased for the pediatric clinic.<sup>59</sup> Also SNPJ added quite a few thousand dollars for the relief effort.

### ***The period after the Second World War***

During that period Slovene immigrants in the U.S. and their descendants put all their efforts to reach a »fair« solution to the question of Trieste and Carinthia. American Slovenes succeeded in their activities to attract the attention of legislative bodies of individual U.S. states and the U.S. Congress. This applies particularly to the so-called Trieste question, which were of interest also to quite a few members of Congress, in particular acquaintances and friends of Balokovič and Adamič. For example, the Washington State Senate passed a resolution to the request for such a solution of Trieste, which was favorable for the Slovenes. The resolution on the question of Trieste, in the U.S. Senate in the general debate on the issue was read by U.S. Senator Warren R. Magnus.

When, in the years after World War II relations between the U.S. and Yugoslavia tightened Cainkar said at a rally of SANC:

*You see how everything has changed since those days when we were invited to speak to our people that we are with them in their struggle against Nazism and Fascism. Today the reactionaries have their day. It will certainly reverse one day! The most important is not let ourselves get confused and afraid.<sup>60</sup>*

From these words it is evident that Cainkar until his death in September 1948 was wearing a deep love for a nation from which he came. He cared, however, also on the tightening of relations between the U.S. and Yugoslavia.

We have to mention that after the beginning of the Cold War the U.S. prosecuted American Communists. It is interesting that in these prosecutions some Slovene immigrants were involved. Most notable was the FBI Special Agent Matt (Mathias, Matty) Cvetič, who was also a member of SNPJ and in his testimonies before Congress and the Senate committee that investigated subversive, anti-American, communist activities he reported hundreds of »Communists«. Among those reported were also some leading members of SNPJ since SNPJ came to support Tito's Yugo-

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<sup>59</sup> Marij Avčin, »Pomoč ameriških Slovencev novi otroški kliniki v Ljubljani.« In: Slovenski izseljenski koledar 1956. (Ljubljana: Slovenska izseljenska matica, 1955), pp. 129–135; Klemenčič: *Ameriški Slovenci in NOB v Jugoslaviji ...*, pp. 268–273.

<sup>60</sup> Compare, »V spomin Vincent Cainkarju,« *Glas naroda*, Vol. 56, No. 193 (New York, 5 October 1948), p. 3.

slavia and participated in the American Slav Congress which was also on the list of »subversive« organizations. For some time also SNPJ was on that list.<sup>61</sup>

## **Conclusion**

From the above it is clear that the Slovene immigrants, especially those from the first generation, to which also Cainkar belonged, followed with interest the developments in the old country. This interest has increased notably during the political crisis, such as was the First World War. The American Slovenes followed closely events around London Agreement, Italian occupation of Primorska, as well as onset of Fascism in Italy. Much attention Slovene immigrants in the United States paid to the events in their old homeland during the World War II, the Trieste crisis as well as the crossroads of 1990s to the process of democratization of Slovenian society, Slovenia's independence and its international recognition.

All these events were closely reported by the Slovenian newspapers in the U.S., American Slovenes have responded to them in different ways. In various campaigns for the support of the old homeland, leaders of organizations of Slovenian immigrants played key roles. Among them was the longtime SNPJ president Vincent Cainkar. These actions were relevant not only to assist Slovenes in the old country, but also influenced the stronger interaction Slovenian immigrant communities in the U.S. and the preservation of Slovenian identity among its members.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> More on this see in Andrej Kobal: *Slovenec v službi FBI in druge zgodbe ameriških Slovencev*. (Gorica: Goriška Mohorjeva družba, 1981); Daniel J. Leab: *I was a Communist for the FBI – The Unhappy Times and Life of Matt Cvetič*. (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University, 2000); Mojca Moškon Mešl: *Politično delovanje Andreja Kobala v ZDA – M.A. Thesis*. (Ljubljana: Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, 2005), pp. 227–247.

<sup>62</sup> Klemenčič: »Slovenska izseljenska zgodovina kot del slovenske nacionalne zgodovine ....« pp. 175–193.

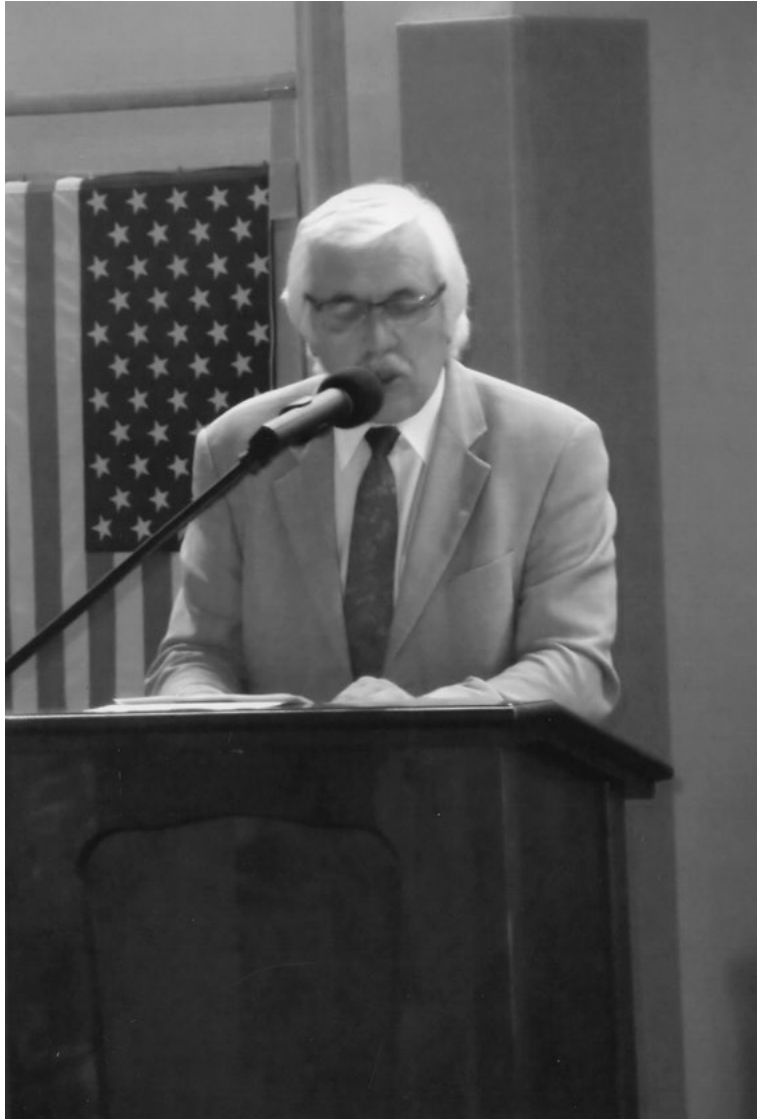
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James Cainkar, Grandson of Vincent Cainkar (in the middle),  
Joseph C. Evanish, Current President of SNPJ (right).*



*James Cainkar, Grandson of Vincent Cainkar (left),  
Joseph C. Evanish, Current President of SNPJ (right).*



*From the left: dr. Boris Jesih, State Secretary of the office for Slovenians Abroad, Alojz Sok, Major of Ormož; Donna Cainkar, Wife of James Cainkar; Joseph C. Evanish, Current President of SNPJ; James Cainkar, Grandson of Vincent Cainkar; Minister dr. Boštjan Žekš, Chair of the Office for Slovenians Abroad; and Anton Luskovič, President of Ormož Historical Society.*



